WHICH WAY?

Lewis B. Fisher

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WHICH WAY?

A STUDY OF UNIVERSALISTS AND UNIVERSALISM

BY
LEWIS B. FISHER
RYDER UNIVERSALIST HOUSE
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

UNIVERSALIST PUBLISHING HOUSE
BOSTON AND CHICAGO

LC 1972

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OCT 24 1921

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no. 1

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PREFACE

We are often asked for a brief, plain statement of what Universalists have believed in days past and of what they are believing now, in this new age, with its new Bible, its new science, its new psychology, sociology, economics and theology.

I know of no such statement that can be given to these inquirers. This book is an effort to make such a statement. It is not written mainly for Universalist preachers, nor for our well-trained laity, although it is hoped that it may not prove useless for such.

It is written chiefly for those who do not know much about Universalists but who have a desire to know, and who are willing to give a little time to the study of the subject.

For the general history of the denomination the best books to read are the two large volumes by Rev. Richard Eddy, D. D., entitled "Universalism in America." Smaller books are Fisher's "Brief History of Universalism" and the later book by Rev. John Coleman Adams, D. D., "Universalism and the Universalist Church." This last-named little book has an excellent Universalist Bibliography.

All these, and other books or periodicals on the subject, can always be obtained from the Universalist Publishing House, 176 Newbury St., Boston, or from the Universalist Western Headquarters at 6010 Dorchester Ave., Chicago.

INTRODUCTION

Some people who profess to believe that theology is out of date may refuse to read this book. It is fairly certain, however, that if they will read the first two chapters they will read all of them. For this is a book which takes the facts and arguments of theology and makes them breathe and live. No arid discussion of obsolete theories, but a vivid, moving story, is contained in these pages—a modern miracle, if you please.

The author has not made the mistake, too common in our days, of asserting that beliefs do not matter; that theology is out of date; that there are only superficial differences between the Churches. In its underlying philosophy Universalism is farther from Luther than Luther was from Leo the Tenth. The author knows that beliefs move the world, and that without them but little progress would be made. It is also evident that he appraises historic origins at their true value. Just as you cannot understand

the climate of to-day without studying the storm-swept seas of paleozoic ages, or the religion of ancient Israel without some knowledge of Babylonian and Canaanitish origins, so you cannot rightly interpret the religious movements of to-day without knowing the story of their underlying causes. Thoughts have their roots deep in the past, and the study of to-day inevitably leads to the study of all the yesterdays.

It is not only historical but constructive criticism that we find. There is no love for mere attack, but a profound anxiety for the truth. The author proves his thesis out of the living and growing science of philology. The Bible receives a modern interpretation which squares it with the language of to-day and the facts of experience, and rescues it from the absurdities of literal translation and traditional theology. I know of no book that traverses this ground so briefly yet so thoroughly, or in so delightful a manner. Dr. Fisher has placed the entire Universalist Church under obligation for this timely and valuable study.

There is yet another admirable feature to which I must call attention. There is no attempt to shift the burden of personal re-

sponsibility to an indefinite social entity, which has become the fashion in some quar- and spiritual rather than economic forces will solve all problems. The book is lumi- ters. Sin and salvation are both personal, nous with these truths, without which there would be but little excuse for the Christian Church.

History, philology, theology, unite to make this a delightful and valuable addition to Universalist literature.

Roger Sherman Galer.

I. WHICH WAY?

Universalists are often asked to tell where they stand. The only true answer to give to this question is that we do not stand at all, we move. Or we are asked to state our position. Again we can only answer that we are not staying to defend any position, we are on the march. No Protestant Church to-day can tell where it stands or what position it defends.

We are not stationary nor are we defending any final position. The Church of Rome is the only Church that stands to-day and defends an unchanging position. Even this old and conservative body now and then shows signs of growing pains, but it counts these as dangerous symptoms to be sharply suppressed. Most people, being conservative, or under the same law of inertia that prevails in matter, are therefore attracted to the old Mother Church, and this fact gives to her great numerical strength and enables her to present an imposing front.

But no Protestant Church to-day is as sure about finalities as is the Catholic Church, and for this reason Protestants suffer in numbers and in solidarity.

We do not stand still, nor do we defend

any immovable positions, theologically speaking, and we are therefore harder to count or to form into imposing bodies. We grow and we march, as all living things forever must do. The main questions with Universalists are not where we stand but which way we are moving, not what positions we defend but which way we are marching. Our main interest is to perceive what is true progress, and to keep our movements in line with that, and not to allow ourselves to move round and round in circles simply, like Fabre's insects, or like a squirrel in its cage. Of course we can always say that we stand for God and man, for Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, for the Bible and the immortal soul, for redemption from sin, and for a human race that, in some day yet to be, shall learn to move on in harmony with God. But all these words and phrases take on new meanings, and therefore need new definition, in each succeeding age. Nothing is clearer than the fact that the old definitions do not meet the needs of the new day, or that the old theologies do not function for the new occasions. Our worn phrases are always losing their old meanings, and must forever be finding new meanings in the light of new experiences.

All good men and women to-day want a gospel that functions for the individual and for society, but the gospel that functioned for these yesterday fails to-day, and the gospel for to-day will have to meet the enlarging knowledge and experience of to-morrow.

What may probably be more disturbing to minds that tend to inertia, which are dreading changes, and stoutly demanding final and authoritative statements and definitions, is that they will never get what they want in this or in any other possible world. What such people think they want is not what they truly need. No human word ever has reached or ever will reach finality of meaning. Each living age always has defined religion in the light of its own experiences, and all ages to come will do the same.

Our attempt here then is to show which way Universalists are moving, rather than where they stand or what positions they occupy. If the inquirer is impatient with this indefiniteness and demands at once some final and fixed statements of unchanging and absolute authority, I confess that I do not know how to satisfy him.

There was a time when he might have been referred to the graveyard, but with the

latest discoveries about matter he is denied even that refuge to-day. That the body returns to dust we may perhaps still confidently affirm, but what dust is no mortal man to-day knows. It is certainly not the dead thing that the Bible writer thought it was when he wrote. To-day the Ethics of the Dust are far more wonderful than even John Ruskin saw, and the wonders of matter fill the soul with awe. The Rock of Ages is no longer a fixture on which selfish souls may lazily slumber, but has, paradoxically enough, somehow got transformed into a brave craft out on the high seas of life and love and thought.

This situation is very wholesome, but it is certainly trying for an indolent spirit that is attempting to be a Protestant, and especially is it trying for Protestant preachers and teachers.

Professor Coe, of Union Theological Seminary, sums the situation as follows:

"Every intelligent Catholic has definite and correct ideas as to what his priest stands for, and of the meaning of membership in the Catholic Church. This gives the advantage of a unified and determined front, indeed, but the ulterior problem here concerns the ends prescribed by the hierarchy to the faithful. To save one's own soul by obeying an autocratic spiritual authority, and to contribute to the final and complete triumph of this autocracy,—

this conception of spiritual life, duty and destiny makes the problem of the priest too simple. He can fulfill his essential functions by performing certain prescribed operations in his strictly official capacity, and teaching certain doctrines and duties already strictly formulated. The problem of the Protestant minister goes many fathoms deeper than this."

Yet Professor Coe, in a feverishness not common in a teacher so thoughtful, talked about the breakdown of the Protestant ministry, precisely because that ministry, working on its problems so truly called "many fathoms deeper," has not produced the same results that the priest produces.

The thoughtful, earnest Protestant preacher or teacher, trying to lead his people along the Way, never has produced and never will and never should produce the material results that the priest produces by massing men in fixed and final positions where they stay to be counted.

Universalists do not regret these facts about life, light, truth, growth or change. We glory in these moving, living visions and gladly pay the price for following them. We are afraid of nothing except finalities. What we greatly desire is ever more abundant life, and what we most fear is that our search for this life may dwindle into feverish and ill-

advised motions. Which way? is the only big and vital question, for a living, growing spirit, in this living universe, filled with the Living God. The only stand we take is that we refuse to stand at all, and the only position we defend is that no position is final.

2. UNIVERSALIST CREEDS

Universalists, like all Protestants, have always been timid about their own principles. We, with all Protestants, have affirmed the liberty of each soul to think for itself, itself to judge what is truth, to follow its "inner light," accountable to no human authority, but to God only.

But no sooner do we affirm this principle, than we become afraid of our own decision, and begin to try to make human statements that have absolute authority. We love liberty, and at the same time harbor suspicion that nobody can be safely trusted with it. Therefore, having thrown off the authority of popes, our fathers looked with fear on the throne thus vacated, and tried to put the Bible in the empty chair.

But the evident truth is that God has never provided a pope nor a book that is final, absolute authority over the spirit of man.

These authorities failing us, we have tried to formulate creeds on which we could make a final stand. In 1790 a company of Universalists spent fourteen days together in Philadelphia trying to write a creed and make a plan of church organization, strong

enough to make them one body, and yet elastic enough not to deprive one of them of the right to think and do according to his own inner light. They worked long and diligently at this difficult task, and gave us our first creed of five articles. In 1803, thirteen years later, our fathers, and presumably our mothers, although their presence is not emphasized in the records, met at Winchester, N. H., and reduced the Philadelphia creed, which they preferred to call a profession of faith, to three articles, as follows:

Article 1.

We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

Article 2.

We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

Article 3.

We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practice good works, for these things are good and profitable unto men.

We make no apologies for this creed. Considering its date, we are very proud of it, and confidently affirm that no Church of that

time can show a creed as true. Thousands of Universalists can and do often repeat this Winchester Profession of Faith.

The makers of this creed, however, had no idea that it was a final or inerrant utterance, no word or syllable of which could ever be changed without disrupting the universe.

They had all had some bitter experiences with the creeds of their time, and were not over sure of the possibility nor of the desirability of such human attempts to make final expressions of the inexpressible. They, therefore, there and then voted to attach to the profession a saving clause.

"Yet while we, as an Association, adopt a general profession of belief, we leave it to the several churches and societies . . . to continue, or to adopt within themselves, such more particular articles of faith as may appear to them best under their particular circumstances, provided they do not disagree with our General Profession. And while we consider that every church possesses within itself all the powers of self government, we earnestly and affectionately recommend to every church and society, to exercise the spirit of Christian meekness and charity toward those who have different modes of faith or practice, that where the brethren cannot see alike, they may agree to differ, and let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

As the years passed, later Universalists, in their great and commendable desire for a more compact and efficient working Church,

sometimes forgot the saving clause, and stressed the very words of the creed as the one absolute condition of fellowship for all.

It thus came to pass that for more than half a century the Winchester Profession was almost as much a red flag of controversy and challenge among us as it ever was a symbol of authority. Rev. I. M. Atwood, D. D., the wise and beloved president of our Canton Theological School for more than twenty years, used to say that he himself could say the Winchester creed without doing violence to his intelligence, but when some of the brethren began to insist that to change a word of the old creed was almost equivalent to the sin against the Holy Ghost, he thought some changes would better be made in behalf of the life and liberty of the Church.

In 1899, Universalists reached a truce of fatigue rather than the victory of any particular faction, if there were factions, and agreed to adopt as our symbol what we have since called our "Five Principles." These are:

The Universal Fatherhood of God.

The Spiritual authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God.

The certainty of just retribution for sin.
The final harmony of all souls with God.

To these Five Principles we followed our fathers by adding the following "saving clause:"

"The Winchester Profession of Faith" is commended as containing these principles, but neither this nor any other form of words is required as a condition of fellowship, provided always that the principles above stated be professed."

The arrangement seems to have solved the creed problem of the Universalist Church. Since its adoption we have gained steadily in unity of spirit and of action.

It is true that every preacher and parish may use any form of statement of belief that they see fit. Everybody insists, however, whatever creed he adopts, that "the principles above stated" are always central in it. While these varied versions often display a certain mental agility, and some imagination may often be needed to find in them our "Principles," the matter has never yet been brought into any ecclesiastical court among us, and there is no disposition anywhere to resort to such measures of repression or limitation. We have been kept busy in some quarters explaining that by the spiritual authority of Jesus we never mean the same as intellectual or political or ecclesiastical

authority, but the greater authority the Master expressed when he said "I am the Way."

We also insist that by final harmony of all souls we never mean what a wise and much loved teacher, Prof. George B. Foster, once described as "a theory that makes this a world of joyless work, and that a world of workless joy." Our final harmony is found in walking forever in the Way, and not in arriving at some fixed estate.

The words "universal salvation" might express our thought if only salvation could forever cease to mean getting into a final good place and keeping out of a final bad place, and take on its true meaning of spiritual health and sanity, and glad, free walking in the Way.

Universalists, somehow, always mean, whatever form of words they use, that every soul must learn better and better forever to live and work with its "Senior Partner," God, and that no soul can be permanently left out of this partnership, without hopelessly bankrupting the firm. Rev. Charles Alden says that the true firm name is "God and Sons," and that all the trouble arises because so many members of the firm are silent partners and not active.

So the creed makers among the Universalists have never supposed that they were speaking last words, but have simply been trying to turn searchlights ahead on the Way.

Rev. Frederic W. Perkins, D. D., speaks for all of us when he says:

"Any man who appreciates and claims his heritage as a Christian freeman uses a creed as a cry to rally believers, rather than to expel heretics. That is a vital distinction. Is the Church a citadel of faith to be defended, or an army of the faithful to be led? In the latter case the creed is not a pass-word but a battle hymn, and its power and value are not in the words of the song so much as in the uniting spirit that it sings. We waste our time trying to erect creedal barriers against our foes. They are not likely to importune us to enter. Rather must we send our cry to the hearts of our friends, wherever they may be, inside our Church or without, confident that any Christian of the free mind and loving spirit can understand a fellow freeman when he speaks."

3. SOME PIONEERS OF THE WAY

Universalists are those who hold the faith that, under the universal fatherhood of God, sometime all human souls will learn to walk upward and onward together in the Way. The Way is not safety first, but always service first.

The names and addresses of the pioneers in this faith we do not know, and in this world will not know. Some day we may find them out. Surely those of this Way have been greater benefactors of mankind than those have been who could see only endless division and hopeless discords in this race to which we all belong.

We do not know who it was that first perceived that all the members of a tribe or a clan were blood brothers and sisters, who should behave toward each other accordingly. Who later enlarged this idea to make it include all the tribes in a given territory as having common interests that could be best conserved by federation, we do not know. We do not know who first dreamed of a brotherhood of states or of a league of all nations. As a fact even up to our own time all this has been hardly more than a dream of the few.

The great masses of mankind have believed in angry, jealous gods, dividing their friends from their enemies in endless separation, and have tried to act like the gods they worshipped.

Politicians and profiteers and militarists have so far generally had their wicked way, and blocked all these aspirations toward a united human race under the true and Living God.

Only a few have seen that the dream of a human race walking together in the Way can never come true by the strong killing the less strong, or by the rich robbing the poor, or by ecclesiastics threatening fires of endless vengeance. Belief in a God who is not Himself of this wicked way is the first need in inducing men to leave such ways. The way of the wicked shall perish. Help hasten the day.

Zoroaster, the Prophet of Persia, saw the race of man engaged in an age-long battle between the good and the evil. The invisible spirits of light or of darkness fought with man on one side or the other in this warfare from which there is no discharge. The result was to be a final and complete victory of the forces of light. The scholars are not agreed as to whether Zoroaster thought that the wicked ones would be de-

stroyed entirely, or finally be cleansed from their wickedness by the purifying fires through which all must pass. Thoughtful men, however, always know that to annihilate a wicked soul, in the effort to cure it, is not a victory of the good at all, but the completest possible victory of evil.

Professor James once used a phrase about pouring out the baby with the bath that is an apt description of that theology that holds to the annihilation of wicked souls. To kill the sinful soul in the effort to cure it, is never a successful spiritual operation, any more than the surgeon counts his work successful when the patient dies under his knife.

Dr. George A. Gordon rightly declared that if God succeeds Universalism must be the result, and Universalists do not count the destruction of souls, nor their endless torment, nor the passive permitting of them to destroy either themselves or the moral universe, as consistent with faith in a God that succeeds.

Universalists have a fondness for Zoroaster, even if there is some question as to exactly what he meant by a victory of the good. Modern men cannot go with him in his dualism, nor in his visions of angels and

demons, although his personifications of the invisible forces of the universe appeal always to the poetic sense.

If the traditions are correct as to the date of the death of Zoroaster it is not impossible that he was living in 586 B. C. when Nebuchadnezzar carried Judah captive into Babylonian exile. Fifty years later it was Cyrus the Persian, the Zoroastrian, who, becoming master of Babylon, aided the Jews to go back to Palestine and rebuild their city and their temple. It is interesting to reflect on the influence the contact of two religions here had on our religion to-day. In the Book of Isaiah the reader comes face to face with a great prophet of the Jews who declares that Jehovah girded Cyrus, and called him by his name, although Cyrus had not known Jehovah. This spectacle of Jehovah actually using a man of another race and another religion to accomplish his purposes greatly enlarged the mind of the Jew. He began to see the universals. He began to perceive that the Eternal doeth His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, until at last to Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess His name. The Prophet caught the idea that his people were not to be the military tyrants of the

world, crushing all their enemies under iron heels. But rather Judah was to be "The Suffering Servant," who should not fail nor be discouraged until he should have set justice in the earth. Let Jews and Christians alike remember this, for, before Jesus came, thought never reached nobler vision. Not many in Israel, however, could long sustain themselves at such spiritual heights.

The Hebrew saw his people in cruel and insulting captivity among the nations. Not yet could they love and forgive their enemies. Rather they began to expect a Messiah, a soldier like David, who should come with vengeance in his hand, destroying all their enemies and making the Jew the supreme military nation on earth. This sort of Jewish Messianic expectation had grown very strong by the time Jesus came, and his early disciples, being Jews, were full of the belief in a Messiah of military prowess destroying their haughty foes with the sword.

This crude, revengeful Messianism largely shaped the reports of Jesus' life and teachings, although it is all as far from the real Jesus as East from West.

Few modern men and women have yet risen to such a sentiment as this that Dr. Kohler taught his students:

"Our modern conceptions of time or of space admit neither a space nor a world period for the reward and punishment of souls, nor any intolerable conception of eternal joy without useful action, and eternal agony without any moral purpose. Modern man knows that he bears heaven and hell within his own bosom."

Zoroaster then, and the great Prophet of Isaiah, are pioneers of the Way. The teachings of Jesus and of the makers of our New Testament will be spoken of in coming chapters.

We barely notice here the names of a few pioneers of the Way among the teachers of the Christian Church during the early centuries.

Hosea Ballou 2nd (1) and Edward Beecher (2) and Rev. J. W. Hanson (3) have made clear all the facts we know about the Universalism of the teachers of those times.

Beecher maintained that of the six theological schools of the early Church, four taught universal restoration, one taught annihilation and one only taught endless torment.

Beecher and Hanson are both confident

(1) Ancient History of Universalism.
(2) The Doctrine of Scriptural Retribution.
(3) Universalism in the First Five Hundred Years of the Christian Church.

that real Universalism was never condemned by any General Council nor endless punishment ever taught by any ecumenical creed. In a local council at Constantinople in 544 A. D. Origen's doctrine was for the first time officially condemned and anathematized.

Dr. Hanson shows, however, that what was really condemned was "The fabulous pre-existence of souls and the monstrous restitution that follows from it." Whatever may have been intended, it is certain that there is no condemnation of real Universalism in those words, but only of a certain method of reaching Universalist conclusions, for which no one to-day would contend for a moment.

In the books referred to, and in many others, any reader can find full accounts of Clement and Origen and the Gregories and Theodore and other teachers who believed and taught that Jesus was stronger than Satan, good stronger than evil, love more enduring than hate, and that at last God shall be all in all.

These teachers differed as to the proofs of this conclusion, but they were one in the conviction that such a conclusion must somehow be reached or the universe sink into darkness and chaos.

4. JOHN MURRAY AND THOMAS POTTER

From the fifth century of our era to the eighteenth, Universalists are not conspicuous. For a long time the "dark ages" was the term applied to the earlier of these centuries. To-day the preferred name is the Middle Ages.

We know to-day that God does not leave Himself entirely without witness in any age, and that no age, therefore, is entirely dark. Surely centuries that gave us Dante and Bernard of Clairvaux and Francis of Assisi and some of the abler schoolmen, and men of these types, should not be thought of as entirely dark. In the main, however, always gladly noting the exceptions, the earlier of these ages were times of ignorance and superstition.

To a frightful extent, in those ages, religion, so called, was a belief in demons thronging the earth and the air, an angry God up in the sky in a fixed spot called heaven, and a Christ chafing with passion to get hold of his enemies and get even with them.

One view of Christ was that which the Jewish Messianism had fastened on the

Christian Church. Jesus is in the sky only temporarily. He is very soon to come in the clouds, with trumpets and fire and all his angels, to set up a judgment seat, and reward his friends and get even with his enemies.

As the year one thousand approached, the words of Peter that with God a day was as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, were in many minds, and a vague terror was aroused in countless souls that the Day of the Lord was at hand. The orthodox view, since Augustine, however, had curiously modified this New Testament view. Jesus is not to come to earth again, he has gone into the sky to stay. As men die they are to go up into the sky at once, or, some said, they are to lie in their graves until all are dead, and all rise together into the sky, and there is a judgment throne up there which tries them all and sends them to heaven or hell. There is nothing like this in the New Testament. That almost invariably teaches that Jesus is coming back to earth very soon, in that generation, that he is to come down miraculously out of the sky, his angels with him, and set up judgment on earth, at once.

The current exhortation was never

"Prepare to die," but always, "Watch for his coming."

These two views, the one that Jesus is to come here to earth in material physical form to judge all men, and the other view, that men are to die and go up into the sky to be judged, are both in the world still, side by side, and it is high time that both of them were dismissed forever. Neither view is a correct guide to the Way.

In America Universalists date a revival of their ideas from the coming of John Murray (1). Murray was born in Alton, England, in 1741 and came to this country in September, 1770, a young man under thirty. His landing at a place called Good Luck in what was then the wilderness of New Jersey, and his strange meeting with Thomas Potter, make the idyl of the Universalist Church (2).

Potter had built a church at Good Luck, and, while any passing preacher was always welcomed to it, yet none of them preached to suit Potter, and he was steadfastly awaiting a preacher whom the Lord would surely send, who would preach the real everlasting Gospel. When Murray arrived. Potter unhesitatingly greeted him as the preacher he

(1) Life of Rev. John Murray.
(2) John Murray's Landfall, by Nehemiah Dodge.

had long expected. From this beginning John Murray went on his preaching itinerary all over America as then it was. He finally settled at Gloucester, Mass., where he married Judith Sargent, the daughter of one of the leading colonial families. The Sargent-Murray House still stands, and, owing largely to the efforts of Rev. Levi M. Powers, D. D., it has been restored to its original appearance and is a striking and beautiful example of a fine colonial dwelling much appreciated in the city where it stands. Murray later moved to Boston, where he died in 1815.

In 1870 Universalists gathered in large numbers at Gloucester for the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the landing of Murray in America.

In 1920 they met again in the same spot, for the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the same event (1).

John Murray had been converted from Calvinism to Universalism by a London preacher named James Relly. The Rellyan theology was simply Calvinism made Universal. That is, only the elect are saved, but everybody is elect. Or, put in another way, Christ had redeemed all men by his death on the cross, so all men are

(1) From Good Luck to Gloucester, by F. A. Bisbee.

saved. No mortal man can do a thing toward deserving or earning any salvation whatever. All men are saved only by the grace of God, His undeserved and unearned love to man. This grace is made effective by the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross. In some way that blood paid the price or the penalty of all human sin, so all are redeemed.

Elhanan Winchester was a noted contemporary Universalist preacher, and the two men often met and were friends, and yet friends with something between them. Winchester believed that sinners had to pass through punishment, in some cases eons of it, to cleanse them from sin. Murray regarded this theology with open contempt as salvation by punishment, whereas, as he saw it, salvation was by grace, the free gift of God to all.

Relly had written a book called "Relly's Union," which Murray always put second only to the Bible. This book taught the mystic union of all souls with Adam, in which all fell with him, and the even deeper union with Christ by which all are saved in him.

Murray's theology is no more artificial and out of date than is all the theology of his day. It is always to be estimated in the light of the age in which Murray lived. It was

simply the Orthodoxy of his day extended to include all souls.

"Calvinism Improved" is the correct description of Murray's theology, and this is the title given it by Rev. Joseph Huntington, D. D., who was the learned pastor of the Congregational church at Coventry, Conn., from 1763 to his death in 1794. Dr. Huntington gave the above title to a very vigorous defence of Universalism which he wrote, which doctrine he ardently believed, although he doubted the wisdom of saying much about it. Rev. Charles Chauncey, D. D., pastor of the First Congregational Church of Boston from 1727 until his death, was the author of a book entitled "The Salvation of All Men," in which he too made Calvinistic theology save all mankind, by making all mankind the elect for whom Christ died.

Thus all the Universalists of America were in the beginning entirely orthodox, drawing from Calvinistic premises Universalist conclusions.

Mr. Murray was often asked, "If all are saved, why preach?" A similar question might be put to any Calvinist, of course. If no "elect" can be lost, and no "non-elects" be saved, why preach? Murray was in the

habit of answering this question by saying that while all were redeemed not all were yet saved.

To Murray redemption was something that was done for every member of the human race, by the blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross. But salvation is for each individual to have a personal consciousness and experience of this redemption in his own soul.

There is a great truth for all the ages in John Murray's idea of the reason why the world always needs preachers and teachers. All are redeemed, but only a few at any given time know it. Everybody in all the world needs to be told the fact, and taught to understand and grasp it. The love of God does always enfold all human souls whether they know it or not. The law of God always works in all human souls whether they know it or not. Salvation is to know these wonderful facts in personal experience and to respond to them in loving obedience. For this purpose the world will always need preachers and teachers.

John Murray and Thomas Potter and Elhanan Winchester were men of the Way, and Universalists will always love to honor their memories.

V. HOSEA BALLOU

Hosea Ballou was born in Richmond, N. H., in 1771, and died at his home in Boston in 1852 (1).

His father was a Calvinistic Baptist preacher who got such a living as he could by farming, and preached because he could not help it. His mother died in his infancy. The home, therefore, was that of the pioneers of that time and place, save that it sorely missed the much-needed mother. Ballou, like Abraham Lincoln, never went to school a year in his life, and for the same reason, namely, there were no opportunities within the reach of either of them. Compared with Jonathan Edwards of the generation preceding, or with Channing and Emerson, his contemporaries, Ballou suffers as far as college education goes. From the viewpoint of mental industry and native ability to read and think, he stands the test of comparison much better.

By some, however, Ballou has been dismissed as an ignorant defender of an upstart and dangerous theology. Buckham, for instance, in his volume on "Progressive Reli-

(1) Hosea Ballou, a Marvelous Life Story, Safford. Also Hosea Ballou and the Gospel Renaissance of the 19th Century, Adams.

gious Thought in America" has only this word for him: Extremists, like Hosea Ballou, aflame with zeal against the doctrine of endless punishment.

This estimate of Hosea Ballou puts the writer of it in the class with "Punch," who saw Abraham Lincoln only as the "Illinois Ape," or the "rail-splitter."

One has long since apologized to the world for his mistaken estimate, the other will do so in due season.

That in our day there is so little need for any one to be aflame with zeal against the doctrine of endless punishment is due to Hosea Ballou more than to any other man. This achievement will appear supremely great only to him who appreciates what a horror that doctrine was to all sensitive souls in Ballou's time. Channing, as a child, was perplexed and tortured that his father, after listening to a Hopkinsonian sermon of that day, could softly whistle to himself in careless strains as they were riding home. It seemed to the sensitive child as if his father should have shrieked with terror.

Ballou did not move among the scholars any more than Lincoln did, but, like Lincoln, he knew and loved the common people, and

struck off the shackles of terror and superstition that enslaved them as no other man has ever done. He thought his way from the Calvinism unmitigated of his youth, into Universalism, with only the slightest assistance from any other Universalist. His one book was the Bible, and from that he formulated his theology with almost no other aid. Chadwick says that:

"Ballou was not a learned, not an educated man, but that he knew his one book, the Bible, as well as any man could know it, who knew no other. He was a great preacher and a greater soul. It was not by exegesis but by humanity that he prevailed. He warmed the heart of the Eternal, as the Calvinists had made him, at his own loving breast. We cannot honor him too much."

At the age of twenty he began to preach, and after a few failures found himself, and thereafter grew in power steadily until he became as famous as any preacher of that day. This fame was far from being uniformly friendly or complimentary, indeed in many quarters he was regarded as having horns and tail and cloven foot. People were so accustomed to their chains that they felt uneasy when they were removed, and thought their souls imperilled by one who offered them freedom. We are nowhere told that the people that Moses led out of slavery ever gave him a vote

of thanks, but rather that they often accused him of leading them into deadly peril.

Ballou preached three times each Sunday to his own crowded church in Boston, and nearly every week day in some other place within his reach. His books and pamphlets and the paper he edited went everywhere. Everybody in New England knew of him, even if some, who never personally met him, insisted on calling him "Old Ballou." Usually they were more respectful after meeting and hearing him.

In 1805 he wrote a book, which has passed through a score of editions, and which is still known and read among us, named "Ballou on the Atonement." This book, as edited by Dr. Adams, and with his introduction, should be studied (1).

It would be idle to claim that, in its literary form; this little book is a Harvard Classic, but for those who are willing to be patient with its form and to look for its meanings it is one of the epoch-making books of the world. It is not unlikely that a thoughtful reader will find as much in this book that has stood the test of time as he would find in Edwards, or in the theology of Channing.

(1) Ballou on the Atonement. John Coleman Adams.

In "Ballou on the Atonement" appears for the first time Universalism that is different from "Calvinism Improved," and in it appears also all the substance of Channing's Unitarianism, fifteen years before Channing stated it.

Probably Ballou did not sympathetically perceive all that the different ages had meant as they tried to express the various ideas of the atonement under the figures of sacrifice, ransom, injury to God's honor, the dignity of the infinite law against sin, or the sacredness of a debt. It seemed to him that all these theories of atonement were alike wrong, in that they all attempted to make Jesus on the Cross do something to change, or to appease, or to satisfy God.

To Ballou it was incredible that God could be, or needed to be, changed. It was perfectly self-evident that man was the party that needed to be changed, and so Ballou's thought reversed all the old theories of atonement, and made the Cross of Christ God's supreme attempt to change man. Ballou held to the sovereignty of God as stoutly as ever Calvin did, but it was the sovereignty of fatherhood and not of satanism.

The sovereign purpose of God to recon-

cile the universe to Himself—note that the Scripture never says to reconcile Himself to the universe—by the way of the Cross of Christ, is a purpose that can never be permanently defeated.

Ballou came to believe that the Bible doctrine of sin and its sequences related only to this present world and to flesh and blood. He saw clearly that punishment is natural consequence, and not an artificial, arbitrary, postponed penalty. To wait a long time, until a sinner dies, and then put him into a literal lake of fire, was a clumsy procedure which Ballou could not conceive of God as using. When a soul sinned, then and there, in the soul, began the natural, inevitable, immediate sequences of sin. That these disastrous sequences would continue as long as the soul sinned, Ballou never doubted, but he interpreted the Bible as teaching of sin and its sequences as they are in this world only. In evaluating Ballou's thought here it is only fair to remember the limits he set for himself. He never discussed the question of what reason, or inference, or philosophy may think about the future life. He confined himself entirely to the question, "What do the Scriptures teach?" His answer to this question was that the Scriptures concern

themselves only with sin and its consequences in this life, in this world. Modern Biblical scholarship is far more in accord with Ballou on this point than is commonly known. All agree that in the Old Testament, sin and its sequences are dealt with as of this life and this world only.

As for the New Testament, the key to it is that the age before the Messiah is then and there ending, that the new age has then and there arrived. That generation, some standing there, were to see the Son of Man come in his glory with all his Holy Angels. To apply these vivid texts to a life beyond the grave, when they so clearly refer to an old age then ending and a new age then beginning, was a strange blunder of which Ballou was never guilty. What human reason or philosophic speculation might guess about a future life, was a point Ballou did not discuss. He was sure that the Bible concerned itself with this world, and this life. No Bible scholar to-day would contend, against Ballou, that the most solemn appeal of Amos to prepare to meet God referred to a life beyond the grave, or that the still more searching call of the New Testament, "Watch, for ye know not the day nor the hour when the Lord comes," refers to death or to some

remote future life. Ballou believed that the Bible supported Emerson, in the vigorous protest that he made, and that so many have made in our own time, against the hurtful notion that the sequences of sin could be postponed to some other world, or that the law against sin failed to function here and now.

Ballou undoubtedly did attach an important agency to death. It was like taking a soul out of a dark into a light place. It was a complete change of environment. Not in itself did it ever save a soul, but it might make a soul see a great light, repent of sin, and so be saved by the Cross of Christ. This is not so different from the doctrine of the effect of environment which is accepted by all to-day.

If Ballou underrated the power of a sinful will to resist God, that error is not so disastrous as the opposite notion that a wicked human will can permanently wreck God and His moral universe.

Somehow modern men must bring Edwards on the Will and Ballou on the Atonement and Tousey (1) together.

The only view of the atonement that will function in our age is the view suggested by

(1) The Problem of Human Destiny as conditioned by Free Will. Tousey and Abbott debate.

the mind of every true penologist, that every prison, or every institution that deals with sin and sinners, must be, not a place of aimless torment, nor of wicked vengeance, but a moral hospital for the study of souls, and the cure of soul diseases. It will not make light of the disease, but neither will it make light of the love and power of God, and the consecrated, scientific, trained men and women that work with God for the cure of souls. The Cross of Christ is the world's visible symbol of the Eternal, bending to our human needs. The soul that knew no sin, dying there for us who do sin, the good dying for the bad, the wise dying for the unwise—this is the Way of the Cross.

This is the Atonement that God made, that Christ makes, that every good man and woman must make.

So a critical, thoughtful reader of the Bible will have an increasing respect for Ballou's contention that the Scriptures relate to the life that now is, and to the setting up of Christ's spiritual kingdom in this present world. Those who insist on referring texts about sin and punishment to death and to the future, and on reading into them detailed descriptions of another world, are infinitely farther from the truth to-day than Ballou was in his day.

The Orthodox world, however, believed then, and perhaps suspects even now, that Ballou's Universalism made light of sin. It has seemed to many that he made the love of God a sort of mere "good-naturedness with sin," and surely it is never that. It is good that men protest against that, but it is unjust to suppose that Ballou ever taught it. The only sign that Channing ever made that he knew that he had in Boston a fellow pastor named Ballou was a contemptuous charge that he flung out that somebody, he did not say who, but somebody, taught "that death changed and purified the mind." Ballou indignantly denied that any intelligent Universalist ever taught that.

Channing did not know either that he had a neighbor named Garrison. It is said that he met Garrison once and shook hands with him, but did not know whom he was greeting. He had no more sympathy with or understanding of the hard-hitting, sturdy-fighting editor of "The Liberator" than he had with Ballou.

He utterly failed to appreciate the change that Ballou made over the Murray theology, and the battle for liberal Christian thinking Ballou was waging. Channing did not like fighters; they were too rude for his

cultured tastes, but yet it must be confessed that when driven to it Channing was a noble warrior later.

Universalists have sometimes ventured to compare with Lincoln's Gettysburg address the words with which Ballou closed his book on the Atonement.

They are far better words for mankind to believe and practice than are the words of Edwards in his sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Here are Ballou's words:

"The fulness of times will come, and the times of the restitution of all things will be accomplished. Then shall truth be victorious and all error flee to eternal light. Then shall universal songs of honor be sung to the praise of him who liveth forever and ever. All death, sorrow and crying shall be done away, pains and disorders shall be no more felt, temptations no more trouble the lovers of God, nor sin poison the human heart.

"The blessed hand of the once Crucified shall wipe tears from off all faces. O transporting thought. Then shall the blessed Saviour see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

"Then shall the great object of the Saviour's mission be accomplished. Then shall the question be asked, 'O death, where is thy sting?' But death shall not be to give the answer. And 'O grave

where is thy victory?' But the boaster shall be silent. The Son shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father, the eternal radiance shall smile, and God shall be all in all."

VI. A BIT OF NEW ENGLAND CHURCH HISTORY

The way we are moving can always be illuminated by a study of the way along which theology has moved in the past. In the year 1636, which was only sixteen years after the Pilgrims landed, and the time that the Puritan exodus to America was getting under way, the General Court of the colonies founded a college. Two years later John Harvard gave to it his library of three hundred volumes, and one-half of his estate, so the college took his name.

There may be some things that our Puritan ancestors did that we are willing to forget, but that they, out of their poverty, founded this great university is imperishable glory.

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century Harvard College was fully in line with the prevailing theology. While this theology was Calvinistic, it was yet not all of one type, but fell into several divisions, in which our fathers were deeply interested, but which are mostly forgotten by us. The main group was made up of those who called themselves the "Old Lights," or the "Old Sides." These stood proudly and unmoved on Calvinism straight. There is a story somewhere that one of them once rebuked

an ardent youth who advocated foreign missions, with the sharp words, "Sit down, young man; if God has elected any heathen to be saved, He will save them without any of your help."

They presented theology in very cold and formal ways, in long intellectual sermons. They constantly bewailed the indifference to religion among the people, and the dreadful worldliness they saw around them, but there was no effort to overcome this by any emotional revival methods. Formal religious education, by logical, thoughtful sermons and lectures, was the way to which the dignified churches of America clung, as they had learned in the Church of England.

In 1734 Jonathan Edwards began to preach his awful sermons, of which the one entitled "Sinners in the hands of an Angry God" has come to be the best known. He was followed by such men as Gilbert Tennent, and others, and the result was the most remarkable wave of spectacular emotionalism that America had seen, known as "The Great Awakening." Those who advocated this method of revivalism were known as the "New Lights," or the "New Sides." These two groups were not always nice in the language they flung at each other.

Whitefield, in these years, came from England to America seven times. No more wonderful religious orator has lived than was Whitefield. He could speak outdoors to twenty thousand people, so that the farthest man could hear every word. When we are forced to sit before a preacher who does not know how to project his voice over even the three front rows of seats, we pray for a return of Whitefield. At the fairs, no showman could compete with him, and the crowds deserted the "movies," or whatever then corresponded to them, and flocked to the preacher. The formal dignified churches of America, as of England, doubted the usefulness of Whitefield's methods, and often told him so in language that could not be misunderstood, while he in turn told the "Old School" that they were "Dumb dogs, half devils and half beasts, unconverted, spiritually blind, and leading their people to hell."

Such were the fine spiritual amenities of our ancestors.

Besides this division into old and new lights, there was another theological grouping that has a certain interest to us, as history.

Edwards, followed by a group of preach-

ers, one of whom was Hopkins, of Newport, where Channing grew up, stressed the infinite majesty and sovereignty of God. He had nothing whatever to do, to all eternity, but to contemplate His own glory. Man had no moral power or will whatever. Man was to think only of the glory of God. For this glory, Hopkins taught, man should be willing and glad to be endlessly damned. Man was an insect, the glory of God was all. This fine disinterestedness was known as Hopkinsonianism, and a Calvinist of the Old School had no dealings with a Hopkinsonian.

All these groups, however, were in entire agreement as to the literal, endless hell of material fire, into which the non-elect went at death, and an angry God nursing His majestic glory in the sky.

The Great Awakening was followed by a reaction that left the American churches at their lowest ebb, from about 1750 to 1800. This reaction was in part the natural consequence of a period of such intense emotionalism, and was also partly due to the intense absorption of the minds of Americans in wars and politics.

The Indian wars, and the Revolution, and the struggle to form our new government and constitution, absorbed the minds

of men, and religion and churches suffered. It was during this period of the low ebb of religion, that John Murray did much of his work.

He was one of Washington's chaplains, and did much to aid the people, in the awful disorder and chaos that always have followed and always will follow war, as long as human beings insist on such insanity.

In one way Murray was the means of shaping New England theology curiously. Murray always taught that Christ died on the Cross, not only for the elect, but for all. All are elect. Now Jonathan Edwards the younger adopted this same view. How, then, could he escape being a Universalist? Edwards and his school escaped the Universalist conclusion, from their premise that Christ died for all, by going back to an idea of the atonement invented by Grotius.

That idea is known as the governmental theory of the atonement. It is based on the majesty and glory of God's law. That law must be upheld, whatever happens. Christ did not die for individual men—me or you—but Christ died to uphold the dignity of God's law against sin. That law being vindicated, God could do as He pleased about forgiving individual sinners.

Walker thinks that, even if this was the theory of the atonement that filled New England, it was about the worst possible theory, since every devout Christian feels that Christ died for "me." So thought Hosea Ballou in 1805. Universalists, even at that early date, had made themselves enough known to make it logically necessary to adopt either their views or else this governmental theory of the atonement.

During all these years of mechanical and artificial theology, in which the emphasis seems to have been on exalting God and doing nothing for man, there were many Universalists and Unitarians, and other liberals.

Wearied with the clash of theologies, for some time the feeling was against attempting any new liberal organizations. The idea was for liberals to stay in the established churches, to avoid all doctrinal controversies, to quietly preach religion that all could unite on, and make no new sects. This was the temper of Channing, and of many others. It was the feeling of Mayhew, Chauncey, Huntingdon, and Briant, all of whom were Universalists. George de Benneville, a child of the French refugees in America, landed in Philadelphia the year John Murray was born, and preached Universalism in that

vicinity all his remaining life, but made no movement toward a separate sect. It does not appear that Murray at first thought of a separate church. Adams Streeter and Caleb Rich—the latter being the ancestor of John Dewey of modern fame—preaching in 1775, appear never to have heard of Murray at that time, and to have made no plans for a new denomination. Whether for good or for evil we may not be sure, but this irenic temper was not long continued. One reason for new sects was that until 1834, in Massachusetts, the Congregational Church was the established order, and all who did not belong to another church had to support that one. The matter of taxation, therefore, made for formation of new sects.

But the taxing was not the main reason for this. Calvinism was aggressive and persistent, and liberals were forced to separate or be suffocated.

The Universalists, many years before any formal Unitarian organization in America, met in 1790 in Philadelphia, and in 1803 in Winchester, N. H., and adopted a creed and planned a separate denomination.

Hosea Ballou published, in 1805, his book on the Atonement, which was hardly of a compromising temper.

But the event which shook New England was the appointment of Henry Ware, the Unitarian, to a professorship in Harvard College, which meant that the controlling body of that ancient seat of learning had become Unitarian in 1805. The storm clouds began to gather, but it was about 1815 before the tempest broke.

It was 1815 when Belsham in England wrote a life of Lindsey, in which book he included a chapter on American Unitarianism. Jeremiah Evarts, a staunch Calvinist, published this chapter, with a long preface of his own, and circulated it all over New England.

Evarts said that this chapter convicted the Unitarians of New England of dishonesty in covertly teaching or hypocritically concealing their opinions, and he stoutly demanded that all Unitarians be denied the Christian name, and excluded from all Christian courtesy and fellowship. For ten years and more Hosea Ballou had been proclaiming all the Unitarian principles, but now Channing and Harvard College Unitarians were forced either to keep silent under Evarts' pamphlet or else make a stand and be counted.

So the Universalists first and then the

Unitarians are in the field. Many ask to-day why these two liberal denominations are not one. The answer to this is not easy, as the smallest differences, even long after they are forgotten, often build the highest and stiffest fences between sects. Chadwick, the biographer of Channing, gives this answer to the question why Universalists and Unitarians are not one denomination. He says:

"The early Universalist societies were recruited more in Baptist and Methodist quarters than among the Congregationalists, and on more democratic social lines. The early Unitarians, as socially aristocratic, were naturally averse to a promiscuous salvation. Men might be born free and equal (the habitual misquotation), but that they died so was another matter not lightly to be maintained."

Perhaps it was too much to expect that the Harvard College scholar and the plain man from the New Hampshire hills should start arm in arm and walk side by side. It may be that their spiritual children can not even yet comfortably forget the old inherited divergence.

It may be that a still more vital reason that helped to separation, in the formative years, was the fact that Channing and the majority of New England Unitarians were not yet Universalists. Belsham and some of the English Unitarians were frank believ-

ers in final universal salvation, but it was a long time before Channing came to so large a place.

These causes of separation are, however, merely historical. There can be no real reason why, at any time that it appears to best advance the Kingdom of Christ, that all Liberal Christian people, in all present existing denominations, should not feel and practice the happiest Christian unity.

VII. THE ANDOVER CREED AND CALVINISM IN 1806

The growing strength of the Universalists, and the absorption of Harvard College by the Unitarians, resulted, in 1806, in a strong Calvinistic movement to go up to Andover and build one institution that no Unitarian could ever steal and no Universalist corrupt. It might not be just easy to tell a Unitarian from a Universalist, but Calvinists swore that, if the English language could do it, they would draw up one creed that would forever define the difference between both these pestiferous sects and Orthodoxy. To make this forever certain, the Orthodoxy of New England drew up the once famous, now forgotten, Andover Creed.

This Andover Creed can not be forgotten too much, nor buried any too deep, to satisfy Universalists. It has a certain interest, however, as a historical document, and since we are so far from it that it cannot possibly rouse any animosities in anybody, we dig it up and print it here.

In its day it had a value. To produce it all the factions, the old lights and the new, the old sides and the new, strict Calvinists

and strict Hopkinsonians, all forgot their differences, to make a solid front against Unitarians and Universalists and all other dangerous heretics named in the document.

As a statement of exact theology its value is less, because it is a compromise. The reader can skip it without any offence, but if he wants to know the "pit from which he was digged and the rock from which he was hewn," he would better take a half hour or so and read it.

Here is the Andover Document:

"Every Professor shall be an orthodox and consistent Calvinist, and after a careful examination by the visitors with reference to his religious principles, he shall, on the day of his inauguration, publicly make and subscribe a solemn declaration of his faith in Divine Revelation, and in the fundamental and distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, as expressed in the following Creed, which is supported by the infallible Revelation which God constantly makes of Himself in His works of creation, providence and redemption, namely:

"Creed of the Institution.

"I believe that there is one and but one living and true God; that the word of God, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only perfect rule of faith and practice; that agreeably to those Scriptures, God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; that in the Godhead are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power

and glory; that God created man after His own image in knowledge, righteousness and holiness; that the glory of God is man's chief end, and the enjoyment of God is supreme happiness; that this enjoyment is derived solely from conformity of heart to the moral character and will of God; that Adam, the federal head and representative of the human race, was placed in a state of probation, and that, in consequence of his disobedience, all his descendants were constituted sinners; that by nature every man is personally depraved, destitute of holiness, unlike and opposed to God, and that, previous to the renewing agency of the Divine Spirit, all his moral actions are adverse to the character and glory of God; that being morally incapable of recovering the image of his Creator, which was lost in Adam, every man is justly exposed to eternal damnation, so that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; that God from His mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, and that He entered into a covenant of Grace, to deliver them out of this state of sin and misery, by a Redeemer; that the only Redeemer of the elect is the Eternal Son of God, who for this purpose became man, and continues to be God and man, in two distinct natures and one person forever; that Christ as our Redeemer executes the office of a Prophet, Priest and King; that, agreeably to the covenant of Redemption, the Son of God, and He alone, by His suffering and death, has made atonement for the sins of all men; that repentance, faith and holiness are the personal requisites in the gospel scheme of salvation; that the righteousness of Christ is the only ground of a sinner's justification; that this righteousness is received through faith, and this faith is the gift of God, so that our salvation is wholly of Grace; that no means whatever can change the heart of a sinner and make it holy; that regeneration and sanc-

tification are effects of the creating and renewing agency of the Holy Spirit; and that supreme love to God constitutes the essential difference between saints and sinners; that by convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds, working faith in us, and renewing our wills, the Holy Spirit makes us partakers of the benefits of redemption; and that the ordinary means by which these benefits are communicated to us are the word, sacrament and prayer, and that repentance unto life, faith to feed upon Christ, love to God and new obedience, are the appropriate qualifications for the Lord's supper, and that a Christian Church ought to admit no person to its holy communion before he exhibits creditable proof of his godly sincerity; that perseverance in holiness is the only method of making our calling and election sure; and that the final perseverance of the saints, though it is the effect of the especial operation of God on their hearts, necessarily implies their own watchful diligence; that they, who are effectually called, do in this life partake of justification, adoption and sanctification, and the several benefits which do either accompany or flow from them; that the souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into Glory; that their bodies, being still united to Christ, will at the resurrection be raised up to glory, and that the saints will be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity; but that the wicked will awake to shame and everlasting contempt, and, with devils, will be plunged into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone forever and ever. I, moreover, believe that God, according to the council of His own will, and for His own glory, hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and that all beings, actions and events, both in the natural and the moral world, are under His providential direction; that God's decrees perfectly consist with human liberty,

God's universal agency with the agency of man, and man's dependence with his accountability; that man has understanding and corporeal strength to do all that God requires of him, so that nothing but the sinner's aversion to holiness prevents his salvation; that it is the prerogative of God to bring good out of evil, and that He will cause the wrath and rage of wicked men and devils to praise Him, and that all the evil which has existed and which will ever exist in the moral system will eventually be made to promote a most important purpose under the wise and perfect administration of that Almighty Being, who will cause all things to work for His own glory and thus fulfill all His pleasure. And, furthermore, I do solemnly promise that I will open and explain the Scriptures to my pupils with integrity and faithfulness, that I will maintain and inculcate the Christian Faith, as expressed in the Creed, by me now repeated, together with the other doctrines and duties of our holy religion, so far as may pertain to my office, according to the best light God shall give me, and in opposition not only to Atheists and Infidels, but to Jews, Papists, Mahometans, Arians, Socinians, Sabellians, Unitarians and Universalists, and to all heresies and errors, ancient or modern, which may be opposed to the Gospel of Christ, or hazardous to the souls of men; that by my instruction, council and example, I will endeavour to promote true piety and godliness; that I will consult the good of this Institution, and the peace of the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ on all occasions, and that I will religiously conform to the Constitutions and Laws of this Seminary, and to the Statutes of this Foundation.

"The preceding Creed and Declaration shall be repeated by every Professor on this Foundation at the expiration of every successive period of five years, and no man shall be continued a Professor

on said Foundation who shall not continue to approve himself a man of sound and orthodox principles of divinity according to the aforesaid Creed."

The wise and learned faculty of the Andover Theological School, it may be said here, had no trouble with this creed. For three-quarters of a century they came forward every five years and took the required solemn pledge.

In 1886 Prof. Egbert Coffin Smyth, president of Andover School, was tried and condemned for heresy by the Board of Visitors of Andover. Professor Smyth appealed to the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, and in 1891 that Court reversed the decision of the Board of Visitors, and declared their removal of Professor Smyth illegal and invalid.

Professor Smyth declared that he accepted the Seminary creed "in its historical sense." It was his opinion that "the Seminary Creed might be and should be adjusted to a larger knowledge and life than were open to the framers."

With this opinion Universalists entirely agree, only they have a suspicion that it might be a lot easier to make a new creed than to adjust that old one to any God, or to any world, or to any man, that we know anything about.

In addition to the Andover Creed we print, to close this dreary chapter, a statement of what Calvinism was in those early years of the nineteenth century, as seen by that mild and scholarly gentleman, Dr. Channing. As Channing saw it:

"Calvinism teaches that, in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit, God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt, so that they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually.

"It teaches that all mankind, having fallen in Adam, are under God's wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever. It teaches that, from this ruined race, God out of His mere good pleasure, has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not induced to this choice by any foresight of their faith or good works, but wholly by His free grace and love, and that, having thus predestinated them to eternal life, He renews and sanctifies them by His almighty and special agency, and brings them into a state of grace, from which they cannot fall and perish. It teaches that the rest of mankind He is pleased to pass over, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the honor of His justice and power. In other words, He leaves the rest to the corruption in which they were born, withholds the grace which is necessary to their recovery, and condemns them to most grievous in soul and body without intermission in hell fire forever."

It was after the boy Channing went to church with his father and heard all this

"proved" that he was amazed and shocked, on the way home, to hear his father whistling a light tune.

So out of all these troubled waters of New England theology emerged in 1790 the Universalist denomination, and thirty-five years later, in 1825, the American Unitarian Association. It was hard, and it is yet hard, for these liberal Christians to stand anywhere and at the same time to take no final stand. We shall all learn in due season, however, that true religion is the Way, and not a final stand, nor an immovable position.

VIII. WALTER BALFOUR

The Andover creed and the statement of Calvinism are printed here in full, because they are the best official statements of the theology our Universalist fathers had to face. The cultured gentlemen who framed these creeds were usually of the sort who would not needlessly set foot upon a worm, and yet who contemplated with a calmness undisturbed, and even with positive satisfaction, the spectacle of a God crushing a universe under His heel, for the promotion of His own glory. That Hosea Ballou was an extremist, aflame with zeal against these ideas, is to his eternal credit. These statements, drawn up by quiet scholars in the seclusion of their studies, apparently without taking account in the slightest degree of the real world, and the real human race, sound serene, and it is not easy for comfortable culture to-day to realize the terrible intensity with which these ideas were held by the common people, and are still so held in many sections of this world. Those creeds, when held as facts realized, made the universe a chamber of horrors, and a madhouse for countless sensitive people.

These creeds are excellent illustrations of the futility of attempting to express

finalities in theology, and to fasten these finalities on generations yet unborn. They are amazing also in their attempt to formulate the substance of the Christian religion without making the slightest reference to the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule, or the law of love to God and to man, or the seeking of the Kingdom of God, all of which Jesus so expressly put first in His teaching. They have no perception of world-wide missions, or of the passion for social justice which are the great keynotes of the Bible. They put everything of importance up in the sky, postponed until after death and judgment. Man is an insect contemplating the glory of God, if he does not entirely forget that in his sharp struggle for existence.

The Andover creed, however, conceded one point of interest, namely, that God intended, by the whole scheme, to bring good out of evil. This indirectly happened in the one particular that it gave Walter Balfour to the Universalist Church. Walter Balfour has gone out of fashion among Universalists. It is doubtful whether his name or his books are mentioned any more in our pulpits or our seminaries. Yet this man once filled a very notable place in our ranks as we moved along our way. Dr. Emerson, who shared with Dr.

Cantwell the honor of being our greatest editor in days past, in his biography of Ebenezer Fisher, who was for twenty-one years the head of our oldest theological school, said that it was the study of Balfour's Inquiries that made Universalists of both him and Dr. Fisher. Practically all of our earlier teachers and preachers would have said the same thing. Dr. Emerson declared that it had always seemed to him that no candid person could read Balfour's books and ever again believe that the doctrine of endless hell torments is taught in the Bible. Balfour's books are all out of print long ago, but all the main points for which he contended are incorporated in the new Bible, by which we mean the American Standard version, or such less official versions as those of Moffatt or of Weymouth, who are recognized scholars in the Orthodox Church.

Walter Balfour was born in Scotland about 1776, in the home of a weaver. During his childhood he was carefully trained in all the doctrines of the Church of Scotland, and received deep and lasting religious impressions into his naturally reverent and devout soul. He was one of a dozen or so young men who organized themselves to hold a weekly meeting together for prayer and

Bible study. A wealthy man in the town determined to devote a part of his money to educating for the ministry some of these young men.

Balfour was one chosen for this purpose, and thus obtained an excellent theological education, especially in the Hebrew and Greek original Scriptures.

He preached in Scotland for several years and then came to America, settling in Charlestown, Mass., which was his home until his death. He was happily married there, and several children were born into the home.

He preached constantly in the Orthodox churches within his reach, and after a time gathered around him a congregation of his own, meeting regularly for worship in a hall. To add to his slender income as a preacher, he kept a small shop, although it seems as if he must have been a sort of Robert Browning shopman whose soul was in biblical and theological matters far more than in his dry goods and groceries.

So this quiet, obscure Scotch Calvinist preacher went on his humble way, never doubting in his mind that his Calvinism was God's complete and final word to mankind. He said later that he had met a few Univer-

salists, and argued with them, but always knew that he had the best of the argument. Now begins that great storm of controversy, between the Calvinism of New England on the one side and Universalists and Unitarians on the other.

Channing, in 1819, preaches his famous Baltimore Sermon, and Moses Stuart, of Andover fame, begins some replies.

Of course, the active mind of Walter Balfour was intensely interested in every word of this controversy, and not a doubt entered his mind but that liberalism would be entirely wiped out, when Stuart finished with Channing. A portion, perhaps the major portion, of the whole controversy, hinged on the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the deity of Jesus. Both of these doctrines Channing had emphatically denied, and he had affirmed that the Scriptures nowhere teach men to render spiritual worship to Jesus, as to God.

Stuart, replying to this assertion of Channing, quotes two passages of the New Testament. The first passage is Philippians 2:10: "That in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of

God the Father." The second text is Revelation 5:13: "And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever."

Professor Stuart's comment on these texts was that "things in heaven, earth, and under the earth was a common periphrasis of the Hebrew and New Testament writers for the universe." He also said of these texts, "If this be not spiritual worship, and if Christ be not the object of it here, I am unable to produce a case where worship can be called spiritual and divine." Thus a remarkable result of the Calvinist-Liberal controversy of that day, that has always interested Universalists, was that it caused a man who every five years all his working life cheerfully signed the Andover creed, to affirm that some day the universe—all rational souls—should render spiritual and divine worship to Christ.

In his zeal to answer Channing, and to defend the deity of Jesus, Professor Stuart must have lost sight of the fact that he was making a very strong defence of Universal-

ism, which was one of the heresies that he had solemnly sworn to oppose. But if this fact escaped Stuart, it did not so easily get by Walter Balfour. He was profoundly disturbed and even sorely distressed by Stuart's words. If the universe is some day to render spiritual and divine worship to Christ, what is that but Universalism?

In the next few years Walter Balfour wrote to Moses Stuart nine letters, at intervals, urging, almost imploring, him to explain why the texts he had used do not teach Universalism. The nine letters are far from being mere repetitions of each other, but contain a careful study of the whole Bible, and an examination of the many other texts that appear to teach the same great hope. He entreats the famous Andover professor to explain these texts in some way, as against the heresy of Universalism he is so solemnly pledged to oppose. The nine letters are not all sent by post to Professor Stuart, although some of them are. They are all printed in the "Universalist Magazine" of Boston, and are all signed "An Inquirer after Truth." It is an interesting fact that all this time no one knew who the Inquirer was except the Inquirer himself. The editors of the "Universalist Magazine" gladly published all the

letters, but they did not know, and could not even guess, who the Inquirer was, although they made a number of cunning efforts to locate him. For a long time Professor Stuart pays no attention to these letters, but finally writes to the Magazine a brief note explaining his silence.

He explained that a busy teacher can not possibly attempt to reply to anonymous letters, and also that the nine letters are simply an effort to draw him into a newspaper controversy with a man whose mind is already made up. The unknown Inquirer now disappears for a long time. He is not a man to rush into new opinions without careful study and thought.

In his nine letters he had examined all the texts which appear to teach Universalism. Now he proceeds to study all those texts which were commonly thought to teach endless punishment. In the quiet obscurity of his humble study, unknown to all men, alone with his Bible and with his God, for both of which no man ever had more loving loyalty and reverence, he carries on a long and exhaustive study of every Hebrew or Greek word or phrase which the King James translators, in 1611, had translated by the English words, hell, endless, damnation, devil, end of

world, etc. He became entirely convinced that these modern English words had come to have a meaning which the original words never had, and so did not truly translate the original.

Balfour became entirely convinced that the Bible, rightly understood, is a Universalist book. Now while Walter Balfour was not a man to rush thoughtlessly into new beliefs, it was also true of him that when he saw the truth, no considerations of worldly prudence, or of personal ease and welfare, could for a moment induce him to remain silent. Having made up his mind fully as to the truth, he no longer conceals himself. He announces to the world his new convictions and that the Inquirer after Truth is Walter Balfour.

Henceforth, to his death, he is a Universalist writer and preacher of an intensely doctrinal type, aggressively defending his new-found faith.

His writings were published in book form, and in the libraries of all the older Universalists could always be found these books, named Balfour's First Inquiry, and Balfour's Second Inquiry. The various answers to and criticisms of these books kept Balfour, the rest of his days, in ceaseless doctrinal controversy from which he never

shrank, and of which he did not weary. As remarked, all Balfour's works are long ago out of print. The warfare of the texts, in which he was a master, has receded in its power over the minds of the thoughtful, although as a fact it is yet the way most people use the Bible, who use it at all.

His conviction that the Bible is only one book, teaching only one doctrine, has been set aside by modern scholars. It must be admitted, however, that Walter Balfour had a far more scholarly way of marshalling Bible texts than Murray ever had, or any other exegete of his day knew. His conviction that the Bible was one book always teaching one doctrine, was that held by Channing and all other scholars of Balfour's day. Balfour's array of texts did, to a degree unusual in his day, remember the whole trend of Scripture, and the progressive revelation of God found therein. All the truths which Balfour defended are easily found to-day in other books than those he wrote. Universalists of to-day regard the work of Balfour far too lightly. He was, as each man always is, a son of his times, but he was also a man for the ages. To an amazing extent the new translations of the Bible accept and concede the points that Balfour made in his "In-

quiries." The Universalist Church would be to-day a much larger body than it is, if it had concentrated on teaching every child born in this world, during the formative years of its life, the substance of Bible interpretation which Walter Balfour worked out. Universalists, however, waited for Orthodox scholars, in the newer and better translations of the Bible, to adopt Balfour's contentions, with never a word of credit to Balfour, while we, too, forgot him. Because the main points for which he contended are accepted by us, and conceded by educated liberal people, we think his work is done and his day is past.

As far as this easy optimism is true—and it is truer now than it was in Balfour's day —we thank God and take courage. Universalists have no taste for exalting verbal textual theology above the personal experience of the Living Christ, or above applied religion. But let us not forget that, taking the whole world over, the vast majority of children are yet born and reared in a darkness unbroken by a ray of Balfour's light and hope. The chances are infinitely greater, even in this day, that a child will hear the old words that Balfour hated, used in all their horrid popular meanings, than they are that

he will be born and reared a child of our cultured Liberalism. It is yet true, in many parts of all our great cities and our own country, and of the races of men in Europe and Asia and Africa and the islands of the seas, that the vast majority holds to angry, vengeful gods, to devils and demons, to hells, to hatred of enemies, to militarism and selfish greed, to oppression and exploiting the weaker ones.

Still the world plans wars, and wastes its substance on killing and hating, while the children die, and we sit in our foolish complacency saying that our Liberal doctrines have won the victory, and that we no longer need a Universalist Church. "I am happy, I am free, what care I for the rest of the world!"

Those who speak that way to-day are the men and women possessed with devils, albeit respectable and socially recognized devils. Against them the Eternal Christ always speaks his "Woe to you Pharisees and Scribes."

Walter Balfour, with all his limitations, was yet a great and a brave spirit, moving along the Way. The world never had more need for men of his faith than it has this day.

IX. HELL

Walter Balfour died on Jan. 3, 1852, as peacefully as if he had never fought a theological battle in his life.

Moses Stuart died the next day, apparently serene in spite of his Andover creed. It is not likely that he has signed that document every five years since 1852, any more than the rest of the Andover Professors have. Undoubtedly Stuart and Balfour have both long rejoiced that the former decreases and the latter increases as far as dogmatic theology is concerned. They are both always adjusting their creeds to the larger knowledge and life.

In 1877, Balfour's body having been in its grave a quarter of a century, Canon Farrar stood in the pulpit of Westminster Abbey and preached a sermon on "Hell, what it is not," and lo, Walter Balfour lives again, reincarnated. In this sermon Farrar spoke a sentence that caught the ear of the world. Here is his sentence:

> "Now I ask you, my brethren, where would be those popular teachings about hell,—the kind of teachings which I have quoted to you and described —if we calmly and deliberately, by substituting the true translations, erased from our English Bibles, as being inadequate or erroneous, or disputed ren-

derings, the three words, 'hell,' 'damnation,' and 'everlasting?' Yet I say unhesitatingly, I say claiming the fullest right to speak on this point, I say with the calmest and most unflinching sense of responsibility, I say standing here in the sight of my God and my Saviour, and it may be of the angels and spirits of the dead—that not one of these three expressions ought to stand any longer in our English Bibles, and that being, in our present acceptation of them, in the notion that is which all uneducated persons attach to them, simply mistranslations, they most unquestionably will not stand unexplained in the revised version of the Bible, if the revisers have understood their duty."

All this is just what Walter Balfour said twenty-five years before, only he said it in shorter and better English sentences. Universalists waited for a quarter of a century for a Canon of the Church of England to say, in a way that made the world listen, what their own Balfour said first.

The revisers to whom Farrar referred were the English and American scholars, then at work together, revising the King James Version of 1611 into the Revised Bible published in 1885; and it is interesting to note what these scholars did on the points Farrar named. The fact is, however, that the Revised Bible of 1885, while an improvement on the King James in some ways, was inferior to it in other ways, and has never come into general use. That version of 1885

being published, the English scholars disbanded.

The American scholars, however, kept together and continued their careful studies. The result was the American Standard Version of 1901. Although this American Bible is not final or perfect, it is the best existing translation of the original Scriptures into English that has yet been made, with any large body of scholarship behind it.

Since 1901 several scholarly Orthodox individuals have translated the original Greek New Testament into our English speech, the most successful perhaps being Moffatt and Weymouth. These translations of the Bible are put into the hands of the students to-day in all liberal Orthodox seminaries, as acceptable.

This American Standard Version and the translations by Moffatt and Weymouth are what we refer to as the New Bible.

By the Old Bible we mean the King James version of 1611. The interesting fact is that this New Bible concedes every point that Balfour and Farrar advocated. In the Old Testament of the New Bible, the word "hell" does not once occur. In the New Testament of the American Bible it occurs thirteen times in the text, but each time in the

marginal notes gives the true original word, as Farrar said it should do. In Moffatt and Weymouth, however, the word "hell" is not once used, not even in margins.

This fact is not known as it should be. There is no Concordance of the New Bible. All existing English Concordances are of the Old Bible. Nearly all the Sunday School lessons, and printed explanations of Scripture for our children, refer only to the Old Bible. The Old Bible is still the text read from most pulpits, and insistently used by revivalists. All the published debates of our fathers are based on the Old Bible.

Age has endeared it to millions, its words are familiar, its English hard to improve. The result is that the people know little or nothing about the New Bible, if indeed they know much of any. As far as the words and phrases that Balfour and Farrar referred to, the Old Bible still keeps the popular mind in the greatest possible ignorance. Universalists should insist on the New Bible, and see to it that every person knows the facts that Balfour stood for. If a preacher prefers the Old Bible for his pulpit services, he should at least, as he reads, translate or use correctly and intelligently the words that Farrar spoke of. The truth is easily accessible and perfectly simple.

The word "hell" in the Old Bible is always a translation of some one of four original words. The four words are "sheol," "hades," "tartarus" and "gehenna." All these are now perfectly good English words.

Any intelligent person that has access to an unabridged dictionary can find out what these four words mean, as easily as he can find out the meaning of any other English words. The definitions given in the unabridged dictionary are sometimes such as are made by old school Orthodoxy, to be sure, but a careful study of all the meanings given makes the matter clear enough. If by the word "hell" we mean a literal lake of material fire, into which the wicked are cast, and where they are kept alive for endless torture, as the popular mind has always thought of the word, then nothing is clearer than the fact that not one of the four original words ever meant "hell" and that not that word, or any other single English word, can truly translate the original. That is what Balfour and Farrar claimed, and that is what the New Bible concedes. Take a brief glance at the facts about the four original words. The Old Testament word is "sheol." It occurs sixty-four times. In the Old Bible it was translated twenty-nine times by the English

word "grave," three times by "pit" and thirty-two times by "hell." In the New Bible sheol is not translated at all, but the original word is printed in the text the whole sixty-four times exactly as Farrar and Balfour said it should be.

So in the New Bible "hell" does not occur once in the entire Old Testament. It may be still pertinent to ask the question, "If the doctrine of hell is as important as revivalists and preachers of the old type claim that it is, how could God let mankind go in ignorance of it down to the time of our New Testament?"

The next word to notice is "hades." This is a Greek word occurring only in the New Testament, and there eleven times. The Old Bible translated this word ten times by "hell" and once by "grave."

Even the King James translators could not bring themselves to say when they reach 1 Cor. 15:55, "O hell, where is thy victory," so they used the word "grave," and the New Bible does the same, or uses the word "death." In the other ten passages where "hades" is used it is not translated at all, but brought over as an English word, as it should be. Anyone can look up the word "hades" in any good English dictionary and

ascertain its meaning. It certainly never meant "hell."

It may be interesting to note that the Bible never said that the rich man was in "hell," but in "hades," which is a very different idea.

The third word that the Old Bible translated "hell" is "tartarus." The one and only time that word occurs in any Bible is in 2 Peter, 2:4. For some unknown reason, when the American Revisers came to this passage, they departed from their excellent plan by which they had brought sheol and hades untranslated over into the English text, and they rendered "tartarus" by "hell." However, they printed in the marginal note the explanation, "or tartarus," so no reader need be perplexed. Moffatt and Weymouth, with more consistency, print the original word in the text, as they should. Any dictionary defines this word clearly. Whatever Peter meant by it he certainly did not mean "hell," as he says plainly that it was a dark place where the wicked awaited judgment, and so no finality at all.

The last of the four words which the Bible translated "hell" is "gehenna." This is a compound of two words, one of which means land or valley, the other word being

Hinnom, a family name. Any reader of the Old Testament can learn all it teaches about the Valley of Hinnom, by reading, carefully, Joshua 15:8 and 2 Kings 23:10 and Jeremiah 7:31, and verses following. The valley was originally beautiful, but, for reasons Jeremiah makes clear, it became an abhorred spot. At the time of Jesus it was the symbol of sin and its consequences. The Jews understood the reference; in addressing the Gentiles the word was probably never used.

The word "gehenna" occurs twelve times, and in the Old Bible was invariably translated "hell." James used it once, when he said the tongue was an unruly member set on fire of gehenna. The other eleven times—really, counting repetitions in the Gospels, it is only eight times—the word was used by Jesus himself. This fact has made gehenna the most impressive of the four words.

The word is not found in the Septuagint, nor the Apocrypha, nor in any classical Greek author, and was never used by Paul, nor Peter, nor John, nor, with the exception noted of James, by any New Testament writer.

One can only wonder, if the fact that Jesus alone used the word seemed as im-

pressive to them as it does to us, why it is not used everywhere in the New Testament. The Old Bible always translates the word "hell." The American Bible does the same, but always explains in the marginal note, "or gehenna." Weymouth and Moffatt follow their invariable rule with all the four words, and do not translate at all, but print in the text the originals. Any good English dictionary will inform the reader what gehenna means, although Universalists are likely to think that the definitions are sometimes given an unwarranted orthodox slant.

Here is the conclusion of the whole matter then. The old word "hell" has gone out of the New Bible except that it appears in the American Version thirteen times, where the original word is always given in the marginal note. From Weymouth and Moffatt it has disappeared entirely, and everywhere the original words are printed in the text and left untranslated.

Modern Universalists and liberals often use the word in a sense of their own, as Sherman's statement that "War is Hell," or Dr. Newton's, when he discourses so truly in his book on "The Mercies of Hell," or Dr. Adams, who insists that he "believes in hells because he has seen so many of them."

Probably these genial Liberals are using the word in a sense that fairly well translates the original words. But they are sure always to be misunderstood. It is a serious question if they would not do better to drop a word that has gathered around it such terribly false and wicked popular meanings to a large portion of mankind.

Has the New Bible, in thus either dropping "hell" entirely, or else giving the true word always in the margin, made any difference about the facts of sin and its sequences? It has made this most vital and important difference: It has added immensely to the solemnity and impressiveness of these facts.

The Old Bible, undeservedly, but none the less truly, had come to mean to millions that the sequences of sin could be postponed or even evaded. These sequences were thought by many to be artificial, arbitrary, escapable, revengeful, hateful, cruel, useless, endless and hopeless. Because of these dreadful misapprehensions, the world forgot the impressive truth about punishment for sin, or else treated it lightly as a flippant joke or as a profane oath.

The world has no greater need than that of a real revival of the conviction of the cer-

tainty of just retribution for sin. The New Bible, by bringing back the old impressive symbolic words, enables the thoughtful preacher or teacher to drive home to the consciences of men the truth about sin and its sequences.

This truth is that the sequences are related to the sin, as reaping is to sowing. These sequences are not delayed, evaded or forgotten. Our fathers at Winchester declared that holiness and happiness are inseparably connected, which in their minds of course implied that sin and unhappiness are also bound together. Cause and effect are the modern account of sin and its results. The old evil word "hell" should be left out of our vocabularies.

In the popular mind it involves the most dangerous conclusions. Well done, Walter Balfour! Well done, Canon Farrar! Universalists salute you. The New Bible for the New Age admits your noble contention that the word "hell" has outlived its usefulness if it ever had any, and should now be forever dismissed from human speech.

X. DAMNATION

What a profane word to print as the heading of a chapter in a modern book. For a long time mothers have washed out the children's mouths with soap to punish them for uttering this word, and to make them remember never to do it again. The angry child, however, who had never heard of any Bible but the old King James version, might truthfully have made what would seem like a good defence by affirming that he was only using a good Bible word, which the ministers use often. So things reached that strange pass where the Bible and the preachers taught the children to say a word which fathers and mothers punished them for using. In King James's time the word had not taken on such an ugly meaning and was not counted as profane. It still has its uses in books on law.

Damnation is one of the three words which Farrar said would not longer be in our English Bible if the revisers understood their duty, and that was what Balfour said. Balfour, in his First and Second Inquiries, had given all who would read him a complete account of the word "hell," and also of this word "damnation," as used in the Bible.

Let us see how it is in the New Bible with these bad words "damned," "damnable" and "damnation."

The plain truth is that even in the Old Bible, while the originals of these words occur about 214 times, they were invariably translated correctly by the words "judge" or "condemn," with the strange exception of only fifteen texts. Just why the scholars of 1611 translated the original words correctly about two hundred times, and then went out of their way to translate them fifteen times by "damn" or its cognate words, is a mystery. Of course, it is to be remembered always, as has been said, that the words did not have the ugly sound to their ears that they have taken on in our day.

The interesting fact is that Balfour and Farrar have come to have their way absolutely here, and the words do not even once occur in the New Bible.

Countless people and families to-day have never known the Bible, or if they ever read it, have dismissed it from their lives. This is an irreparable loss both for individual character and for family life. Before they dismiss or ignore this best and greatest religious literature, they should at least hear it rightly read. Any teacher or preacher who

to-day reads in public the Old Bible, and speaks aloud the word which heads this chapter, is not only false to the real Bible, but misses and obscures its most impressive meanings.

The Bible, rightly translated, is immensely more useful than any version can possibly be where we hold to the words because they are good English or familiar to our ears, when such words do not truly say what the original writers meant to say.

It takes only a page to look at the whole fifteen times that the Old Bible said "damned," "damnation," or "damnable," and to see clearly how much more impressive the true translations, "judge" or "condemn," are.

The writer of 2 Peter did not say "damnable heresies," or "their damnation slumbereth not," but he did say "destructive heresies," or fatal divisions, and "their condemnation slumbereth not." It is far more useful for all of us to be taught that moral and ethical heresies are destructive, and that judgment for them slumbereth not, that it is not postponed, than it is to try to scare us with a pagan idea of a lake of fire in some future existence.

In Matt. 23:14 and Mark 12:40, and

Luke 20:47, the words "greater damnation," which do not translate to us what Jesus said, are far less impressive than the "greater condemnation" or "severer punishment," which give us his true meaning.

The "damnation of hell" which the Old Bible prints in Matt. 23:33, is far less forceful than "the judgment of gehenna," which is what Jesus said. Some Jews may have understood Jesus to mean, by gehenna, literal material fire in a future world. It is certain, however, that many did not so understand him, and it is certain that to-day the material figure of gehenna, used as a symbol of the spiritual law of the awful and certain sequences of sin in the soul, finds an assent in the minds of the thoughtful, who cannot for a moment accept the word as the name of a material place in a future world of spirits.

In Mark 3:29, the Old Bible said that some were "in danger of eternal damnation," but surely it is truer to the meaning of Jesus to say, with Weymouth, that some are guilty of the sin of the ages.

A "resurrection to judgment" is far truer than a "resurrection to damnation" can be, as the Old Bible printed it in John 5:29.

In Romans, third chapter, and also in

chapter thirteen, the Old Bible said of some that their damnation was just, or that they should receive damnation. Surely the New Bible is better here when it says condemnation or judgment.

It is, indeed, a fearsome thing to say that a person who partakes of the communion incorrectly eats and drinks damnation, as the Old Bible does say in 1 Cor. 11:29. But it is always true that any person who enters into that or any other service with low and improper motives, is "judged" for it, as the New Bible declares. It sounds harsh to hear Paul, in 1 Tim. 5:12, saying what the Old Bible puts in his mouth, that young women who marry again will be damned, and then a few verses further on advising them to marry. But it is true, proved by all human experience, that either men or women who marry unadvisedly or lightly, for improper motives, are "condemned."

It is hard to believe that all those unbelievers that the Old Bible tells us of in the doubtful passage, Mark 16:16, shall be damned, because they cannot do the miracles listed in the following verses.

But it is amply proved that all who will not believe the truth are condemned, and "this is their condemnation, that Light has

come into the world, and they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

So it is in every case where the Old Bible used the dreadful words that have come to sound so profane to modern ears. The New Bible omits them every one and prints the true English translations. In so doing the New Bible gains immeasurably in impressiveness and in its power to awaken careless and sinful men to a conviction of their profound spiritual peril.

No person with a grain of intelligence will find in this fact that the New Bible omits "damned" and its cognates ground for saying that it makes light of sin. The true words, which the New Bible uses, are vastly more searching and more solemn.

Nothing is gained, much is lost, by keeping the old false words before the people. Now is the judgment of this world. To-day all human motives must be put beside the motives of Jesus. If they are of his Way, they stand approved; if they are of any other way, their judgment, or condemnation, begins at once, and never ceases until the wrong motives are destroyed and the right motives accepted.

Balfour and Farrar were right about the words this chapter deals with. They were men of the Way.

XI. ENDLESS TORMENT

The third word that Canon Farrar in his great sermon, with great solemnity, declared should be expunged from our English Bible, is the word "everlasting." Presumably he meant that that word should not be applied to sin and to its punishments as necessarily meaning endless.

That was what Walter Balfour affirmed. But that the word should never be used in the Bible, in any connection, is not a contention that Universalists usually make, and can hardly be a point that Farrar would defend.

Universalists may be mildly interested in the fact that the word "endless" was never used but twice in any English Bible, and in neither case was it applied to punishment. In Timothy we read of "endless genealogies" and in Hebrews the beautiful words, "the power of an endless life," and these are the only times when the Bible calls anything endless.

As to "everlasting," while it was many times applied to life and to salvation, it is worth noting that the Bible never once spoke of everlasting death, or everlasting hell. Had Balfour and Farrar had our New Bible they might have truly affirmed that the phrase

"everlasting punishment" never once occurs. The fact is that the New Bible almost uniformly substitutes the word "eternal" for the older word "everlasting."

Nothing more clearly shows the uselessness of any modern concordance to a reader of the New Bible than does a study of this word "everlasting." According to any concordance you will find this word twenty-six times in the New Testament. But the truth is that in the New Testament of the New Bible you will find the word "everlasting" only once, this single example being in Jude 6.

Jude thought that the fallen angels were kept in "everlasting" bonds unto the judgment of the great day. Apparently the everlasting bonds were not in his mind endless, as the great day was the limit of them. Universalists have never claimed him as one of them, with any great confidence. But, on the other hand, when we read Jude as Weymouth translates him, we find him affirming "the fire of the ages" as all Universalists do. That such fires may go out after they have performed their office Jude does not deny.

Excepting Jude, the New Testament of the New Bible always uses the word "eter-

nal." The words mean the same but the uniform translation is an improvement.

Take, for instance, the text in Matt. 25, about which so much controversy has waged. In the Old Bible it read, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." The American version prints, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life," which is a better version than the old.

But the truest version of all is that of Weymouth, "These shall go away into the punishment of the ages, and the righteous into the life of the ages."

This last translation is the one for which Balfour contended, all his life, and Universalists think that it truly renders the original.

The "punishment of the ages" is a far more searching and expressive phrase than is "endless" or "everlasting" or "eternal" punishment, with the popular meanings these words have come to have.

The mind of the original writer is the best mind to look for when you read the Bible.

That sin leads individuals, and groups of individuals we call society, into the "punish-

ment of the ages," is exactly what all honest observers know and believe, and the words are none too strong to express the facts.

The "time" words of the Bible are commonly the word "aion," or some form of that word. The Old Testament Hebrew word is a different one, but as in the Septuagint that word was almost uniformly translated by some form of aion, we may say that, for the purposes of the English reader, that word is the Bible "time" word.

Now "aion" and "aionian" are no longer simply Greek words, from a dead language. With a slight change in spelling they have become perfectly good English words, which anybody can find, any time, in any good English dictionary.

For instance, referring to the Century Dictionary, one will find the spelling "eon" and "eonian," and every intelligent speaker of English knows what these words mean. Eon means "an age, a long period of existence, a lifetime, a long space of time, eternity, a secular period either definite, or limited to the duration of something, as a dispensation, or the universe, used as equivalent to an age, era, or cycle, and sometimes to eternity," so reads the Century Dictionary. The adjective form of the word is

eonian, and the meaning given is "lasting for an age, perpetual, eternal, lasting for eons or ages, everlasting." As an example of the usage of these words, Whittier's poem, "Andrew Rykman's Prayer," is quoted:

> "Some sweet morning yet, in God's
> Dim, aeonian periods,
> Joyful, I shall wake to see
> Those I love, who rest in Thee."

These words had all these varied meanings in Bible times precisely as they have to-day. They have as many shades of meaning as most other English words have. They may take on the meaning of endlessness; they more commonly mean a limited period of time.

In Isaiah 63:12, the name of God is called eonian, and in Deuteronomy 15:17 the same word is applied to the life of a slave. No one can affirm that the Bible teaches, or that the church fathers taught, "endless" punishment, simply because they call such punishment eonian. The word is applied to many things that end. Every intelligent reader judges the time length meant by noting the object to which the words are applied. The eonian God, or Christ, or the Way of Life, mean endless, not simply on account of the adjective used, but also because our minds

cannot think of them as ending. On the other hand, hills are not endless, although the Bible calls them eonian, because everybody knows that erosive forces are constantly levelling the hills. Eternal or eonian punishment can only be thought of as endless by assuming that it has no purpose. If the punishments of God have a loving and healing purpose, they must continue until that purpose is accomplished, and then must cease.

That eons pass without this gracious purpose being accomplished, we must, alas, admit, but that God is endlessly defeated Universalists will not admit.

Farrar declared that he often heard the same old argument that Balfour and Ballou were always meeting, namely, that since both heaven and hell, reward and punishment, are described by the same word, eonian, they must last the same length of time. They say that if eonian punishment is not endless then eonian life is not either. This strikes the Universalist as about as convincing an argument as it would be to assert that when a hat and a monument are both called "high" they must therefore be the same height. Will any reader of the last verses of Romans, when he reads times that are past called eternal, and in the next verse finds God

called eternal, desire to argue that they must last the same length of time, because they are described by the same adjective?

Farrar challenged his critics, who insisted that the same word must always mean the same thing, to apply that opinion, if they dared to, to the text, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Thus we see that the New Bible, rightly translating original words, never teaches endless, nor everlasting, nor eternal torment or punishment. It does always teach the infinitely more impressive truth of "the punishment of the ages."

The fine phrase "eternal life" occurs forty-two times in the American Bible, but the term eternal death never occurred even once in any Bible. Always do Weymouth and Moffatt translate the terms "the life of the ages" and "the punishment of the ages." In both of these every rational being must always solemnly believe.

Surprisingly, therefore, most gratifyingly, does the New Bible recognize and endorse the main ideas that Walter Balfour lived teaching, and died believing, many years ago.

XII. THE END OF THE WORLD

One of our newer American poets has woven into his verse the idea, common in some quarters, that this world is soon to come to an end, "some say by ice, and some by fire."

Some scientific writers think that they have observed a certain indifference to all attempts to better this human race, arising from the belief that the world is cooling and that in three or four thousand years more it will be too cold to admit of human life, and that that time is too short to accomplish anything in the slow evolution of mankind, and so efforts for betterment are useless and hopeless.

Often this indifference sinks into despair, or into absolute brute selfishness, many asking, "What's the use?" This conclusion may or may not be scientific, but it is always easy for indolent and selfish spirits. Only the noble resist it.

Professor Chamberlain, of the University of Chicago, has recently sharply rebuked these people, by emphasizing his own conviction that this earth will be here, and be habitable by man, not simply thousands, but eons of years yet to be. To him there is no scientific basis whatever for expecting an immediate end of the world.

However, this expectation of the end of the world has come far more from theological teachings than it has from any scientific knowledge, as far as the popular mind is concerned.

The King James Bible teaches the end of the world in seven different passages, and refers to the "last day," the "great day" and "the end" many times more. It is true that, all their lives, Balfour and Ballou and our spiritual fathers contended that these texts did not refer to the material planet, earth, at all, but to the end of an age, and undoubtedly they convinced a few that this is the truth.

But as long as "the end of the world" stood there in the Bible seven times recurring, and preachers, even Universalist preachers, read it just as that old Bible had it, because it was good English, or sacred, so long the millions believed it literally, and accused these fathers of ours of wresting scripture to their own destruction, when they questioned this popular meaning.

Does not Jesus say in Matthew, thirteenth chapter, and in other places, that "the harvest is the end of the world," and "so shall it be at the end of the world?" Paul says, in 1 Cor. 10:11, that certain things are written for admonition to those "upon whom the end

of the world has come," and Heb. 9:26 affirms that Christ hath now appeared once, "in the end of the world," to put away sin.

As long as men read the Old Bible, simply because it is venerable and sacred, and because its English is hard to improve, so long will the common man either expect the end of the world, or else throw his Bible into the junk heap.

Turning now to the American Standard Bible, we find a peculiar fact. In the passages just quoted from Corinthians and from Hebrews, we find these revisers saying "the end of the ages," which is exactly what our fathers, for a century and more, have said that it should be. But when these same revisers come to the same words in the Gospels, they print the old translation, "the end of the world," although in each case they do print in a marginal note, "or the consummation of the age." They were scared lest the end of the world would come, if they departed from the old false words, "the end of the world," in the text, although with much fear and trembling they did admit the truth in a margin. They moved a little, however, and Universalists are thankful for even small concessions.

Weymouth, however, invariably—there

is no exception—prints "the close of the age," ending the Gospel of Matthew with the beautiful words, "And remember, I am with you always, day by day, until the close of the age."

It is therefore now conceded that the Bible really never once speaks of this planet earth as ending, but that seven times it uses the phrase "the consummation of the age," or better, in Weymouth, "the close of the age."

If the Universalists had really concentrated on their special job, instead of waiting for Weymouth and other Orthodox scholars to attend to it for them, by this time every child born would have known before he got out of the "teen" age that the words "hell," "damnation," "endless torment," and "end of the world," are not one of them properly in the Bible. The Bible, rightly translated, teaches none of the horrifying falsehoods that have made this world a chamber of horrors instead of our Father's House, and the insane asylum of the universe instead of God's beautiful home for His rational children, which He designed it to be.

What is meant by "the close of the age" which the Bible teaches? Many devout Jews at the time of Jesus, and for some time before

and after his day, lived in expectation of a Messiah. Such Jews divided time into three divisions. The time before this Messiah was the present age, the time when he arrived was the close of the age, and the time following his coming was the "new" or the "Messianic" or the "Christ" age.

Running through the Bible are such phrases as that day, last day, last days, last time, last times, great day, day of wrath, day of the Lord, and so on.

To the popular mind, knowing only the Old Bible, and the common way of presenting that from the pulpit and in the Sunday Schools, these expressions have all come to mean the day one dies and goes up into the sky to there stand before the judgment seat of Christ, from which they will be sent to an endless material heaven or hell. But these words as used in the Bible never meant these things at all.

The "day" was not when you died and went up into the sky, but it always meant the day when Jesus came to you as the Christ, or the Messiah. Nowhere in the Bible is this day far postponed. That present age, in which the Jews—God's chosen people they are certain—are oppressed, is very soon to end, and a new heavenly age, a Messianic, or Christ, age is to be ushered in. That gen-

eration shall not pass until it comes, some standing there shall see it come.

That expectation took many forms. The Psalmist exultingly sang, "For he cometh, he cometh, to judge the earth." In Daniel God and His Angels are to suddenly appear in three and a half years from the writer's time, to destroy that present bad world order, or age, under which Jews are suffering, and set up the new age, in which they should gloriously rule the world from Jerusalem. Haggai thinks that Zerubbabel is this Messiah. Many thought Judas Maccabeus was the one. Devout Jews looked for the Day, with a confidence surpassing the zeal with which the Germans exulted in that feeling, previous to 1918, and not a few of them in their secret souls still exult in it. Often the Jews looked for "The Day" in the same militaristic spirit that too much animated Germany. Sometimes they thought it was ethical, and would come when they repented of their sins. Sometimes it seemed to them to be ritualistic, delayed until they rebuilt the Temple and established the ritual service, under a holy priesthood. Sometimes it was truly a spiritual expectation, as in the words, "Remember I am with you day by day."

Sometimes they expected a fighter, a lineal son of David, and sometimes they thought the Messiah would be a supernatural man let down from heaven into their midst. But whichever of these many forms the Messianic expectation took, it never meant dying and going up into the sky, as it has so strangely come to mean with many preachers and teachers to-day.

In the Gospels, the end of the age is connected with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the attending awful calamities that came on the Jewish people then.

The New Testament exhortation is to watch for this day, which comes like a thief in the night. Be prepared for that coming, as wise virgins take oil in their lamps when the bridegroom comes to the wedding feast.

In most of its shapes there was not an atom of Universalism, nor of the religion of Jesus, in these Messianic expectations. When the Messiah came he was to torment and destroy and take vengeance on the enemies of God's elect. Not much is said about forgiving these enemies, or loving those who did them such sore evils. Knowing human nature, it would have been a miracle if they had expected that, and yet that miracle did happen, and we know of scores of martyrs

who suffered horribly and died with the wonderful words of Jesus on their lips, "Father, forgive them." But in some of its forms the expectation of the end of that old world, or age, or eon, was a crude and unholy appeal to militarism and brute force, and revengeful destruction.

Let us hope and believe, however, that there was always a true elect, of the quiet and devout, who saw the vision of the end of that age of hate and war, and the coming in of the Christ age of justice and of love. But whether the expected end of the world and the coming of the Day was held crudely and materially, or thoughtfully and spiritually, all alike understood that it was not an event to be long deferred. No one thought of it as meaning to die and to go up into the sky to meet Christ on a heavenly judgment seat, The expectation was rather of a Christ and from which souls are sent to heaven or hell. all his holy angels coming to this earth, in the generation then present, and establishing his judgment seat here. No stranger perversion of a great literature has been known than is this popular view that the Bible teaches the end of this planet earth and a transfer of all human and divine activities to the skies.

The end of the world never meant the end of this planet earth. To the Jew it meant the end of the eon that saw him oppressed by foreign nations, and the coming of the eon that made his people first on earth and his city the center of the universe.

To some of the reporters of Jesus, the end of the world meant the end of the eon of Scribes and Pharisees, against whom Jesus pronounced those awful woes in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, and the destruction of their city and temple, and the coming of the eon of Christ. In the book of Revelation it meant the end of all who persecuted the Christians, and the setting up of a Christian world.

The concept is often held in a material selfish way as expecting a physical Christ, to give material bliss to his friends and destruction of endless torture to his enemies.

The "end of the eon" concept also easily lends itself to the finest expression of the noblest human hopes. The soul of mankind has always dreamed, and it yet dreams, of the end of the wicked brute eons, and the coming of the real Christ day. No well taught man thinks of this as deferred until death, or as happening in the sky. They

pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done *on earth.*"

Tennyson was strictly in the spirit of this best meaning of the Bible, when he wrote:

"Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold,
Ring out the thousand years of old.
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

"Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand.
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be."

Our Universalist fathers were given to this fine poetic spiritualizing of the Bible references to the end of the world. They probably at times read these spiritual meanings into words that the writer intended to have literal meanings.

The end of the world was the end of all sin, of all that was against God's will, and the coming in of the age of the rule of Jesus in every human soul. This was what Balfour and Ballou saw as they blazed their pioneer path, which path shall yet widen into the King's Highway.

Their mistakes, if they made them, were generally somehow mistakes in the right direction.

XIII. THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

As we have seen, the thoughtful reader of the Bible finds himself in an atmosphere of keen expectation and belief that an old eon is closing; that the last days are here; that Messiah or Christ is at the door; that the new and glorious eon is even now to be ushered in. The main question is, in the New Testament, "Is Jesus this expected Messiah or Christ?" To believe in Jesus means to believe that he is this Messiah, and to believe this, saves.

The New Testament makers had much difficulty in making the career of Jesus fit any expectation they had ever had of what the Messiah would be and do.

How could a teacher who was poor, who was a servant of all, for peace and love and forgiveness of enemies, and especially how could one who was crucified, be the Christ? No Messianic expectation had ever taken that shape. They are sorely perplexed for a time.

This perplexity is seen almost at the beginning of Jesus' career, when John sends to ask him if he is really the Christ or are they to look for another, and a closing word is a despairing cry, "we were hoping that it was he who was about to ransom Israel."

But to the ordinary reader, almost without any break, this perplexity and despair changes to certainty. In some way, not made very clear to us, they came to believe that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ; that it was necessary that he should suffer and die and pass into the heavens; but his stay there is to be very brief, he is very soon to return down from these heavens, with a shout, with a trumpet, with all his holy angels with him, and set up his judgment seat of power and glory here in the earth.

This expectation is known as the doctrine of the second coming of Jesus and it surely was the expectation of all the New Testament writers, and in some form is the expectation of all Christians.

There are sharp differences of opinion as to the time and the manner of this coming of Jesus and the setting up of his kingdom, but the conviction that the Person of Jesus comes, that he is a living and moving Presence in this world, and that he is evermore to be such a living Presence until the kingdoms of this world become his kingdoms, these convictions are the very soul of Christianity.

This topic, which has filled volumes, can hardly be condensed into a short chapter in

a small book, but perhaps opinions of it can be itemized.

The second coming of Jesus and the setting up of his kingdom are usually connected events; both these events are connected with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, which occurred in the year 70 A. D.; that generation to which Jesus spoke was to see this.

Human opinions about the second coming are that it is to be a visible, material, physical, spectacular coming, yet to be, but impending; or that Jesus and his disciples were wholly mistaken and that there never was and never will be any such coming as they expected; or that Jesus meant a spiritual, personal coming or Presence, which began then, is always going on, and will go on to the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all in all.

Whichever of these views you take, you can find some Bible texts to support you, and some good people who agree with you.

The only view of the second coming of Jesus that history shows has begun to happen, and that is forever happening and will continue to happen until it accomplishes its purpose, is the last view named above.

This view is that the second coming of Jesus is his spiritual Presence, the Personal Christ, with us always, even to the end. This is the view that Universalists have always held, and do hold yet.

It is an interesting study, to try to determine whether we to-day can count on this idea of the second coming of Christ as spiritual, with the entire confidence that our fathers taught, as Bible teaching.

Ballou and Balfour and Channing agreed with the Orthodoxy of their day that there could be no mistakes in the Bible. All the language of Daniel and Revelation, and the apocalyptic chapters of the Gospels, which sometimes sounds to us so material, was never mistaken, but is always to be interpreted as spiritual metaphor. To affirm, for instance, that Paul was mistaken in 1 Thess. 4:16, when he declared that, before he died, the Lord Himself was to come down out of the heavens, with a shout and with a loud trumpet, was blasphemy. Mistakes do not occur in the Bible. Paul was not mistaken; he meant a spiritual Presence and Voice, and so did all New Testament writers. They made no mistakes.

Professor Burton expresses the best

modern opinion which sets aside the view of our fathers, as follows:

> "The facts of history have shown that Paul was in error in his teachings in 1 Thessalonians, about the Lord coming in the clouds of heaven. It is a palpable infidelity to truth to affirm that this teaching is true; it is a double error to transfer it to the present time and to reaffirm it for our own day."

Modern scholarship, therefore, seems to affirm that the writers of our New Testament expected an immediate second coming of Jesus, as visible and material, and that they were in error in this expectation. It never happened that way, and it never will.

Much more important, however, than what the writers of our New Testament, the reporters of Jesus, thought, is the question of what Jesus himself thought.

That Jesus was over the heads of his age, and that his reporters, who wrote our New Testament, were sometimes in error about him, we may believe, although our fathers strenuously denied it, but that Jesus himself was mistaken about his kingdom, and about the method and manner of his coming, is a disturbing thought to most Universalists.

It is the opinion of considerable modern Liberal Orthodox theology, however, that Jesus was as much mistaken himself about

his second coming and the manner and method of setting up his kingdom, as the writers of the New Testament were.

If this be proved truth Universalists must accept it, as nothing has authority over us but truth, but it will require a rewriting of theology from the ground up. Of course, if Jesus was mistaken upon this very central fact of his mission, he ceases to be the second person of the Trinity, the very God. This will not be disturbing to most Universalists, who are commonly Unitarians on this point. But it will disturb some Universalists, who confidently affirm that "Jesus Christ is God with us." In spite of protests to the contrary, made by the Orthodox Liberal scholars who support the view, the proof that Jesus was mistaken about his coming and his kingdom, will mean the re-writing of our hymn books and liturgies.

A gentle and good teacher, but one who was mistaken about his main point, is a far cry from the Eternal Christ.

Devout Universalists will feel, as Dr. Gordon expressed himself in a recent utterance, to the effect that for a long time Orthodox theology buried Jesus and that now Higher Criticism is trying to do the same thing.

As a fact, however, who knows enough about the actual words of Jesus to affirm that he was mistaken about his kingdom and about his coming?

Jesus never wrote a word, and never asked any one else to do so. All we know is what his reporters have handed to us, in reports written from fifty to a hundred years after his birth. We know that the age and the reporters were possessed with a belief in a crude, material, visible Messianic kingdom. Was Jesus over the heads of these reporters, or was he one with them in their crude expectations of the Messiah and his kingdom? The feeling of a thoughtful reader must be that, while no man can be sure that he has one word that Jesus actually spoke, nevertheless he has in the New Testament a clear picture of a Person that has moved the ages.

Careful scholars have found the layers, in these reports of Jesus, from his earliest teachings, rising to the latest parts of the New Testament. Could a mistaken gentleman have inspired this New Testament record, and grip the spirits of millions, as Jesus has?

John said the Messiah was coming with sifting fan and burning fire, and when Jesus

did not resort to these John sent and asked him if he really was the Christ. Who was mistaken, John or Jesus? A bit later the reporters say that Jesus said that no braver man than John had been born, but yet a child in his kingdom understood it better than John did.

The reporters say that Jesus fled into the wilderness forty days, to struggle with the Messianic idea. He decided, in those days, not to be a profiteering Christ, changing stones to bread, nor a spectacular Messiah, leaping off the temple, nor a military Christ, conquering all the world and its kingdoms by arms. He must then have decided to be the Spiritual Messiah. When did he drop his high decision and revert to the common Messianic crudities?

The reporters tell us that Jesus told them that his kingdom was like a seed, like yeast at work, like the growing corn, like the tree, and that those who loved, and those who served, were first in this kingdom. These are surely not the words of a mistaken teacher. When, then, did Jesus begin to make his mistakes?

Well, the answer is offered to us that he began to make his mistakes when he spoke the "Little Apocalypse" found in Mark thir-

teenth, and in Matthew twenty-fourth and fifth, and in a few passages in Luke, but hardly at all in John. Shall the weird material utterances of these apocalypses outweigh all the sober, solemn words about his kingdom and his Presence with us always, found elsewhere in the records of his reporters?

Some of the language of his reporters in the New Testament is plainly based on their total misunderstanding of the intense metaphors which Jesus may likely have used in the very language of the prophets of his race. It was the perpetual plaint of the Master that even those who had been so long with him did not understand him. On those Scribes and Pharisees who by religious inheritance should have been the first to understand and receive him, he pronounced the most terrific woes that ever fell from lips of flesh, because they would not enter his kingdom themselves nor allow others to enter. It could not have been a crude materialistic kingdom of force and militarism he invited them to enter—into such a kingdom they might indeed have been persuaded —but the Spiritual Kingdom, led by the true Christ or God, that they could not even see, much less enter. Jesus mistaken! Why, his

fine spiritual teachings, even as his reporters caught them, have hardly yet been seriously tried out. The test of the truth that Jesus incarnated and expressed God is not speculation as to whether he actually spoke this word or that word as reported. The test is rather to try to be such a Person as he was and is, and see if it works. Let the Christain world bring the Presence, the Person of Christ into its affairs, and if after fair trial he fails to function, then indeed he was mistaken. He will not fail. We are mistaken; Jesus the Christ was not mistaken. He is always coming in his glory, and shall so come until he delivers up the kingdom to the Father, and God is all in all.

Our fathers did not speak finalities. Modern Christian scholarship can set them right on many points. But their conviction that Jesus Christ was not mistaken about his mission, and his kingdom, and his Person—a Presence with us forever—Universalists still maintain.

XIV. THE WAY OF THE AGES

Any Universalist may write the closing chapter of this book. In sober truth each Universalist is writing it, perhaps not in letters, but in the exhibition he makes of himself to those who are of the Way. One of the beautiful prayers of the Bible is, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

This Way everlasting is the Way of the Ages when properly translated. It appears that there are always two ways open to our feet. One is the way of the wicked, the other is the Way of the Ages.

The Psalmist declares that the way of the wicked shall perish. That is a fine discrimination, which all good Universalists think the Psalmist made intelligently and thoughtfully. He did not say that the wicked should perish, but that their way should. Let us hope that he is right, and that the "Great Physician" does not kill his patients in his efforts to cure them. The Way of the Ages means a way that lasts forever, but the glorious thing about it is not the time that it lasts. The glorious thing about it is a certain

quality it possesses, that is it grows better all the way. Most things we hold grow worse. The tooth of time gnaws them. But this Way of the Ages is always a better way than it ever was before. The path of the just is like a shining light that shines more and more.

One of the names given the early Church was The Way, Paul declaring that in his day there was no small stir concerning the Way. That was encouraging. The only hopeless time and place is that in which there is no stir about the Way, and no interest in it. Jesus never said anything better to us than, "I am the Way." The Universalist Church to-day, like all churches, has a great passion for applied Christianity. That is the Way of the Ages. "*Do* these sayings of mine," said Jesus.

This book has dealt largely with theology, and Universalists are at times impatient with theology. That is good. It would be worth while to write a book that would give Universalists enough theology to last them some little time, so that they could turn their attention to action, doing things.

Theology is an attempt to make a map of a country, but a map is of no use to folks who are not going anywhere. To love ap-

plied Christianity is indeed a fine thing, but a true theology is needed to help by intelligently defining to us what Christianity really is. Men can hardly love God, if God is really like that old Andover Creed description. It is not really much use to try to serve man if man is like that description given in Channing's description of Calvinism quoted earlier. Theology should not make the universe an insane asylum, and God hateful, and then tell us that we ought not to be interested further in theology.

The fact is that we cannot drop the subject at that point. We move amendments. Somehow even when the best amendments are adopted, still we must talk theology, for every minute there is a baby born, and somebody ought to tell it true ideas of God, and of itself, and of its fellow babies.

The passion for applied Christianity, absolutely indispensable as it is, is, however, more a recognition of endless problems than it is a solution of any problem. The question presents countless phases, and men sharply differ as to Christianity and its application.

There is a conspicuous group urging us all to quit what they call our little futile spasms for reforms, and to prepare for a

second coming of Jesus materially and visibly in the clouds, to destroy this lost and wicked world and burn it up. It is long since hopelessly beyond mending, these tell us, the only remedy is a universal bonfire, to get rid of the rubbish. To this group this idea is applied Christianity, and one of them has just given the Baptist Home Mission Society $1,500,000 to invest forever, the income to be used to hire preachers to affirm and apply that gospel. Evidently some war lord, or profiteer, is willing to invest that large sum to induce preachers to fix their attention on this program of a second coming of Christ, thinking that it will leave him to continue his nefarious piracies unwatched and unrebuked.

To another group applied Christianity is of the mystic and quietist type, worship, devotion, meditation, and soul union with the ineffable. Some want the healing cults or applied psychology. Some want political action, often of the most radical type.

Some Christian people are sure that applied Christianity is to keep a big army and navy; others see only satanism in this. Some like prohibition and some refuse it. So the countless aspects and phases of the problem occur and recur. Christians may never

agree on what applied Christianity really is. Perhaps it is well that they do not agree, since there must be endless fields that need workers, and each type of mind should have the field that its faculties fit it to cultivate.

Maybe the great thing, after all, is that every Christian be in the Way of human service, according to his own best vision.

A great need of to-day is some reorganizing of the Christian forces of the world. In many communities the spectacle of many weak but warring sects, each supporting its own against all the others, is a crime. An increasing number of communities are seeing this, and some very hopeful movements exist looking to the cure of these painful distracting divisions. All good Universalists are interested in the advance of the community feeling, and of fraternal interests.

But, after all, denominations correspond to companies in an army. It is not likely that the efficiency of any army would be increased by abolishing the regiments that compose it. Rightly functioning, the divisions greatly add to efficiency. The evil arises when they shoot into each other, instead of at a common enemy.

Denominations, in growing communities, are not an evil, unless mistaken men make

them so. They allow for certain very wholesome expressions of varying points of view. Modern attempts at creedless creeds, or vague and indefinite groupings, in an effort to make a world faith to abolish all faiths, are not ideal ways to reorganize human society. Chesterton thought that he had observed "that every sectarian was more sectarian in his unsectarianism than he was in his sect." So far most efforts to abolish sects have simply resulted in one more sect, more sectarian than any was that it tried to displace.

There is gain in cultivating likeness, but unlikeness is far more interesting. God made all men of one blood, but yet found a way to prevent any two of them from being alike. The unity of mankind should be looked for in "Which Way," and not in monotonous uniformity.

There is a fellowship of the spirit, fathoms deeper than differences of opinion. It is the fellowship of those who love the Way of the Ages.

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